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THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALSHIP IN INTERIOR BRITISH COLUMBIA:

A STUDY IN ROLE CONFLICT

by

BERTRAM NUTLEY BREWER

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Elementary Principalship in Interior British Columbia: A Study in Role Conflict," submitted by Bertram Nutley Brewer in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.



## ABSTRACT

This study examined the expectations of four groups of persons--district superintendents, secretary-treasurers, school trustees, and elementary principals--concerning the tasks performed by elementary principals in the interior of British Columbia, and sought to establish relationships among these expectations.

Analysis of responses to a questionnaire sent to members of the four groups showed that there was conflict of expectations within all groups and between all groups. Within-group conflict was evenly distributed throughout the four responding groups. Between-group conflict occurred between elementary principals and school trustees more than between any other pair of groups.

A second questionnaire was distributed to the principals only, asking for age, certification, experience as principals, and attendance at administrators' meetings. No significant correlation was established between any of these characteristics and the degree of conflict between the elementary principals and each of the reference groups within their own school districts.

The study showed that disagreement did exist among trustees, superintendents, secretary-treasurers, and elementary principals, but the writer concluded that it was not serious, with the possible exception of the differences of opinion expressed on the professional relationship of the elementary principal with his school board. Examination of the data from the second questionnaire showed that most





principals did not attend board meetings regularly, and that one-third of the principals replying did not attend one school board meeting during the previous year. This suggested that one reason for the larger amount of conflict between principals and trustees was a lack of communication, and it was possible that the principals did not actually perceive much of this conflict.

It was proposed that if action could be taken that would lead to increased consensus of expectations for the elementary principalship, the elementary principal would have less difficulty in defining his own role.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his appreciation for the guidance given by Dr. Frederick Enns and Dr. William Knill in the preparation of this thesis. Acknowledgment is also given to the principals, district superintendents, secretary-treasurers, and school trustees who replied to the questionnaire.





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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND THE PROCEDURE

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Much has been written and said about how the role of the principal is developing to include supervision and educational leadership. Twenty-two years ago, in the United States, Otto<sup>1</sup> pointed out that many elementary principals were still spending most of their time in classroom teaching and routine administration, but that some had been relieved of all teaching duties and were able to give their full time to supervision, organization, and educational leadership.

More recently, Shack<sup>2</sup> suggested that "many school systems in Canada still do not recognize the importance of the principal in the organization of their schools." Downey<sup>3</sup> believed that many principals continued to operate in the old tradition, but noted that in Canadian education the change in the concept of the principalship was a very significant feature of the emerging scene. The Royal Commission on Education

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<sup>1</sup>Henry J. Otto, Elementary School Organization and Administration (New York: Appleton-Century-Croft, Inc., 1944), pp. 540-543.

<sup>2</sup>Sybil F. Shack, "The Administration of the Elementary School," Elementary Education in Canada, Joseph Katz, editor (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Company of Canada Ltd., 1961), p. 66.

<sup>3</sup>Lawrence W. Downey, "The Skills of an Effective Principal," The Canadian Administrator, 1:3 (December, 1961), p. 11.





in British Columbia stated that the principal "is the leader in the school which he administers," and recommended:

. . . THAT BOTH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL BOARDS ALLOW THE PRINCIPALS TO CARRY OUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES WITH AS MUCH AUTONOMY AS POSSIBLE;<sup>4</sup>

When a teacher is appointed as an elementary principal in British Columbia he "shall have charge of the organization, administration, and supervision of the public school or schools of which he is appointed principal."<sup>5</sup> This statement in the Public Schools Act is elaborated under the Rules of the Council of Public Instruction.<sup>6</sup> The following extracts are pertinent:

3.09 The principal of a school, subject to the provisions of the Public Schools Act, is responsible for the administration and supervision of his school, including supervision over

- (a) the classification of pupils;
- (b) the time-tables of the teachers;
- (c) the exercises, methods, and general discipline in all its grades; and
- (d) the conduct of all the pupils;

and may, in his discretion, exercise, on occasion, paramount authority in discipline, and administer the same.

3.10 The principal of every public school shall convene, at least one day before the commencement of classroom instruction in September, a meeting of his assistants to discuss all important matters affecting the proper organization and management of the school.

3.11 During the school-year each principal shall convene, at least once a month, a meeting of his assistants for conference on all matters affecting the proper management of each division, with a view to securing not only uniformity in discipline and

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<sup>4</sup>Province of British Columbia, Report of the Royal Commission on Education (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1960), p. 163.

<sup>5</sup>Province of British Columbia, Manual of the School Law and Rules of the Council of Public Instruction (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1963), Section 129(a).

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., Rules, pp. 3,4,10.



efficiency of instruction, but also the adoption of approved methods.

3.13 The principal of every school. . . shall instruct the children in the principles of fire drill, give them frequent practice in such drill, and record the date of each practice.

3.14 The principal of a school of ten or more classes shall make a written report to the District Superintendent of Schools on the work of each teacher appointed to that school in that school-year and on each other teacher not less than once every three years, and make such other written reports on teachers as may be required by the Board or by the District Superintendent of Schools.

3.15 The report made under section 3.14 shall be  
 (a) based on a number of supervisory visits to the classroom as well as on the general work of the teacher in the school;. . .

9.03 The principal of a school, the pupils of which are supplied with text-books under the Public Schools Act, is responsible through the Board of School Trustees to the Department of Education for

- (a) the proper safekeeping of text-books;
- (b) keeping proper records on the prescribed forms of the acquisition and distribution of text-books;
- (c) collecting and transmitting damages from pupils for books lost, destroyed, or damaged through neglect or abuse; and
- (c) such other duties in the care of text-books as may be prescribed by the Department of Education.

To assist elementary principals in administering their schools the Department of Education publishes a sixty-four page Administrative Bulletin for Elementary Schools which is to be used as a guide rather than a prescription in carrying out responsibilities. At the same time, the Department recognizes initiative and resourcefulness, local conditions, and "the local scene" as "often the most fruitful source of new ideas for improving school administration generally."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Province of British Columbia, Department of Education, Division of Curriculum, Administrative Bulletin for Elementary Schools 1958 (Victoria, B.C.: Queen's Printer, 1958), p. 7.





## II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Having acquainted himself with the requirements of the School Law and the advice of the Department of Education, the elementary principal proceeds with the organization, administration, and supervision of his school.

He may draw on his previous experiences as a teacher and possibly, administrator, and may peruse directives, minutes, bulletins, and articles from professional journals when they can assist him. He may also consult with such people as his staff, fellow principals, secretary-treasurer, district superintendent, when they are available, but he will soon come to rely on his own judgment for many of the actions he takes. Some tasks will be mere routine and the principal will follow a set procedure.

However, a number of actions he takes will depend upon an interpretation of policy, and it is in this respect that he may find himself at variance with others in the district or province. For instance, there may be a general policy of enrichment of programme rather than acceleration of brighter students, but there may not be general agreement as to how the programme should be enriched. A conflict may arise between the principal and superintendent regarding the nature of the enrichment materials, or the secretary-treasurer's interpretation of how much money should be spent on the programme might be quite different from that of a teacher's.

Conflict may also arise when solving problems which do not come within any stated policy. A principal may solve such a problem within





his own school and have the support of those immediately concerned. However, he may find that, unknown to him, the matter has been referred to a trustee. It is then possible that the problem will be considered from other points of view and alternative solutions suggested.

When confronted by a conflict of expectations, it is more probable that the principal will identify himself with his teachers, since he regards them as professional colleagues, than with the school board and its executives. Trustees, however, are more likely to regard his position from a hierarchical or bureaucratic point of view.

In his address to a B.C. Principals' Conference, the chairman of a Board of School Trustees stated:

. . . I look upon a large school district as a large business enterprise. It has a board of directors--the school trustees. It has a general manager--the district superintendent. It has a comptroller--the secretary-treasurer. . . . It has individual plant managers--the principals, for workers--the teachers, and the final product is educated human beings.

. . . The school principal cannot do an excellent job--not even a good job--if he does not know what that job is.

. . . I was surprised to read in the report of your 1958 workshop, under the heading "Role of the Principal"--"It was emphasized that too often school boards looked upon the principal as the manager of his team rather than captain."<sup>8</sup>

Conflict also arises from what Smith describes as the "multiple executive" plan of organization found in most B.C. school districts, where "the secretary-treasurer and the district superintendent of schools are considered independent administrators, each of whom reports directly

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<sup>8</sup>R. E. Walton, "What Does the School Board Expect from the Principal?" The British Columbia School Principals' Conference and Workshop, John McGechaen, editor (Vancouver, B.C.: 1960), pp. 94-95.



to the board of school trustees of the district. Authority, as such, is delegated on equal terms to both parties."<sup>9</sup> According to Smith, relationships between the two administrators are not always satisfactory, neither are their functions sufficiently defined. One of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Education is pertinent:

. . . THAT IT BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BOARDS OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES TO DEFINE THE FUNCTIONS OF THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS AND THE SECRETARY-TREASURERS REGARDING THEIR RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE BOARDS.<sup>10</sup>

If the principal is to do his job well, he must become aware of the expectations and points of view of those with whom he is connected. It was the purpose of this thesis to investigate the extent of disagreement among trustees, superintendents, secretary-treasurers, and elementary principals regarding certain tasks related to the principalship of the elementary school in British Columbia. It was not intended to make a value judgment on the findings, but to comment on how they might affect school administration.

The situation could be expressed diagrammatically in a system model based on Gross, Mason and McEachern<sup>11</sup> as shown in Figure 1.

Not only was it intended to explore disagreement between the focal and counter positions, but also between the counter positions

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<sup>9</sup>K. E. Smith, "The Changing Role of Secretary-Treasurers and District Superintendents in British Columbia," Administrators' Journal (B.C.T.F.), IV:2 (March, 1964), pp. 55-69.

<sup>10</sup>Province of British Columbia, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>11</sup>Neal Gross, Ward Mason, and Alexander McEachern, Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), p. 53.





themselves as indicated by the dotted lines in the diagram. As Stapley<sup>12</sup> reported, if the board had one conception of its functions and responsibilities and those which should be discharged by the superintendent, and the superintendent had another conception, then conflicts were likely to develop. Under the multiple executive plan adopted by many school districts this would apply to the secretary-treasurers as well.

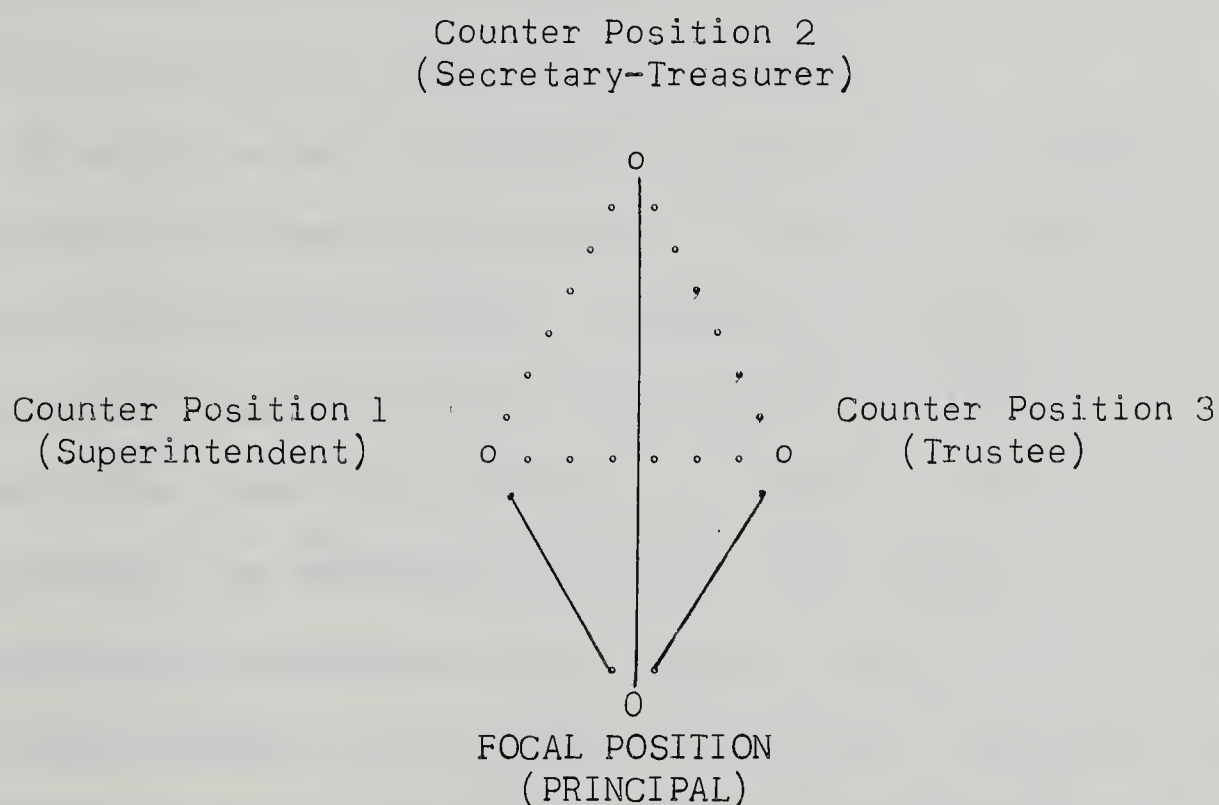


Figure 1. A System Model

### III. NEED FOR THE STUDY

As a preliminary to this study, the writer asked the secretary-treasurer of each school district in British Columbia to supply a job description of the elementary principalship, or to say if such a document existed. Of the seventy-one replying, two did have job descriptions,

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<sup>12</sup>Maurice E. Stapley, School Board Studies (Chicago: The Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago, 1957), p. 40.



five offered lists of duties in lieu, and the rest stated that they did not have such a description. Many respondents expressed interest in the matter, and several asked for a model description if one were available. The replies show that of the eighty-three school districts in British Columbia, most did not have a written description of the job of the elementary principal. The writer believed that one reason for this was a lack of agreement on certain aspects of the job, and that a study was needed to establish the extent of this disagreement.

If certain areas of disagreement could be defined, these could be subjected to further investigation, or could be discussed locally at board meetings or administrators' conferences. As far as the writer could ascertain, no study had yet been published which dealt with the position of the elementary principal as viewed by trustees, district superintendents, or secretary-treasurers. The findings of such a study would also help to build up a more complete picture of the role of the school administrator. If, as Cheal and Melsness<sup>13</sup> suggested, a science of administration is growing out of theory and research, accumulation of knowledge is an essential part of its development.

#### IV. THE HYPOTHESES

To facilitate the investigation of the problem by employing statistical procedures, four hypotheses were set up:

Hypothesis I. There are conflicting expectations on certain

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<sup>13</sup>John E. Cheal and Harold C. Melsness, "The Administrative Aspect of the Teacher's Role," The Canadian Administrator, II:2 (November, 1962).





aspects of the job of the elementary principal among:

1. Elementary principals themselves;
2. District superintendents;
3. School trustees; and
4. Secretary-treasurers.

Hypothesis II. On individual tasks of the elementary principalship there are conflicting expectations between:

1. Elementary principals and district superintendents;
2. Elementary principals and school trustees;
3. Elementary principals and secretary-treasurers;
4. District superintendents and school trustees;
5. District superintendents and secretary-treasurers; and
6. School trustees and secretary-treasurers.

Hypothesis III. When the individual tasks of the elementary principalship are considered together, there is no significant correlation of expectations between each pair of responding groups.

Hypothesis IV. The amount of conflict between individual principals and each of the reference groups within their own districts is not related to certain characteristics of the principals themselves, namely--age, experience, teacher's certification, attendance at school board meetings, attendance at administrators' meetings.

## V. DELIMITATIONS

In many rural areas and small towns of British Columbia, the



school often houses elementary and secondary grades together. In order to confine this study to the elementary principalship, only school districts with separate elementary schools were included. Of these schools, any with fewer than 150 pupils were arbitrarily excluded, so that every elementary principal contacted had a school of at least four classrooms to administer.

Physically, British Columbia can be divided into three areas--the lower mainland; Vancouver Island and the west coast; and the interior. The school districts with the largest enrolment are on the lower mainland and Vancouver Island. This study was restricted to the interior of British Columbia, thirty school districts being surveyed. These were of somewhat similar composition, the largest enrolling 7,500 pupils, the smallest 751 pupils. No district had more than ten elementary schools satisfying the conditions set out in the previous paragraph, while thirteen districts had only one such school each.<sup>14</sup>

The scope of the study was restricted to a small part of the role played by the elementary principal. The items chosen for the survey were ones which the writer believed had given rise to controversy and which were likely to be of interest to the groups surveyed.

Limitations of respondents to district superintendents, school trustees, secretary-treasurers, and elementary principals restricted the investigation to the administrative level of the school system within each district.

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<sup>14</sup>Statistics taken from Ninety-second Annual Report, 1962/1963, Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia (Victoria, 1963).





## VI. DEFINITIONS

Elementary Principalship. The elementary principalship in this study refers to the position held by a principal of a public school enrolling pupils from Kindergarten or Grade I through Grade VI or VII, but which does not have higher grades.

Interior British Columbia. That part of the Province of British Columbia lying to the east of the Coast Mountains.

Role. Consists of the sum of the expectations held by significant alter groups for the behaviour of a person in a particular position.

Role Conflict. Refers to a difference of expectations expressed by the alter groups.

Degree of Conflict. To test Hypothesis I, conflict within groups was measured quantitatively as the difference between the percentages of "agree" and "disagree" responses for each item on the questionnaire. These amounts were arbitrarily divided into three degrees of conflict:

1. Low Conflict . . . Differences from 100 per cent to 67 per cent;
2. Medium Conflict . Differences from 66 per cent to 34 per cent;
3. High Conflict . . Differences from 33 per cent to nil.

Conflict Scores. To compare degrees of conflict quantitatively, conflict scores were set arbitrarily at:

0 for Low Conflict; 1 for Medium Conflict; 2 for High Conflict.





Table I illustrates response patterns for the three categories of conflict within groups, with their appropriate conflict scores.

Significant Conflict. To test Hypothesis II, the response patterns for each item were compared between each pair of responding groups. Those patterns sufficiently different to register significance at the 0.05 level using the chi-square test were reported as demonstrating significant conflict of expectations between groups.

## VII. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

In a recent publication Barnes<sup>15</sup> lists five types of research design:

1. "Before-After" Study with Control Groups
2. "After-Only" Study with Control Group
3. "Before-After" Study with Single Group
4. "After-Only" Study without Controls
5. Ex Post Facto Experiment

The study here reported comes under Design 4, being a survey type in which data were obtained from a group of school administrators, analyzed, and treated in a descriptive manner. An attempt was made to attribute findings to associated variables.

### The Sample

The sample was made up of the following persons in the thirty

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<sup>15</sup>Fred P. Barnes, Research for the Practitioner in Education (Washington, D.C.: Department of Elementary School Principals, National Education Association, 1964), pp. 53-73.



TABLE I

## ILLUSTRATION OF DEGREES OF CONFLICT AND CONFLICT SCORES

Total Res- ponses	Number Agree- ing	Number Neutral	Number Disagree- ing	Percentage Difference	Degree of Conflict	Conflict Score
20	20 (100%)	0	0	100%	Low	0
30	3 (10%)	3	24 (80%)	70%	Low	0
200	130 (65%)	20	50 (25%)	40%	Medium	1
100	44 (44%)	1	55 (55%)	11%	High	2



school districts of Interior British Columbia:

1. All principals of public schools enrolling 150 or more pupils up to Grade VII, and which did not have higher grades; a total of 101 elementary principals.
2. The twenty-two district superintendents assigned to these school districts.
3. The thirty secretary-treasurers of these districts.
4. All trustees of these school districts, a total of 201.

### The Pilot Instrument

A questionnaire of twenty-four statements (Appendix A) was distributed within three school districts in the north coast area of British Columbia. One of these had its own district superintendent; the other two were served by one superintendent. No follow-up procedure was used. Both superintendents, the three secretary-treasurers, and all but one principal replied. Trustees were not contacted individually, and only nine out of twenty-two responded.

Three responses to each item were offered--Agree, Disagree, and Neutral. In the analysis, only the Agree and Disagree replies were used. Letters of explanation and stamped, addressed envelopes were sent out with the questionnaire. Many respondents wrote comments on various items, in many cases qualifying their "Neutral" responses. This suggested that respondents could be forced to Agree or Disagree, provided they were allowed to add their comments. However, as Selltitz<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Clair Selltitz, Marie Jahoda, Morton Deutsch, and Stuart W. Cook, Research Methods in Social Relations (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1961), p. 568.





points out, a graded series of responses presents the question more adequately and acceptably to the person replying. It was decided to add Strongly Agree and Strongly Disagree for this purpose, although these categories were only used in testing Hypothesis IV. For testing Hypotheses I, II, and III, emphasis was placed on the Agree-Disagree response patterns. The important differentiation was between the "for" and "against" opinions of the respondents; thus, Agree and Strongly Agree responses were counted as "for," Disagree and Strongly Disagree responses were counted as "against," and Neutral responses were ignored.

### The Revised Instrument

Guided by specific comments written on the pilot questionnaires, the wording of four items was changed, while six items were dropped because of lack of disagreement.

In the revised instrument (Appendix B) twenty statements were grouped under four of the task areas for principals as described by Campbell.<sup>17</sup> Seven items pertained to organization and structure, three to school-community relationships, five to staff personnel, and five to business management. Campbell's fifth area, pupil relationships, was outside the scope of this study.

Five responses were provided: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Respondents were invited to make comments, and 51 per cent of those replying did so. A separate questionnaire (Appendix D) was constructed to obtain from principals personal

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<sup>17</sup>Roald F. Campbell, John E. Corbally, Jr., and John A. Ramseyer, Introduction to Educational Administration (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1958), pp. 84-124.



data relating to age, experience, certification, and attendance at educational meetings.

The revised questionnaires were mailed individually to the respondents accompanied by short letters of introduction (Appendix C) and stamped, addressed envelopes for their return. The initial response of 60 per cent was increased by a follow-up letter (Appendix C) to 79 per cent. There were 280 responses, made up as follows:

	<u>Sent Out</u>	<u>Responses</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Trustees	201	150	75%
Superintendents	22	20	91%
Secretary-treasurers	30	23	74%
Elementary principals	<u>101</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>86%</u>
Total	354	280	79%

#### The Statistical Procedure

The operations which can be performed on the data obtained in any investigation depend upon the level of measurement achieved. The lowest level, the nominal scale, is obtained by separation into groups, the simplest being a dichotomy as used in this study when responses were classed as "agree" or "disagree." The next level, the ordinal scale, requires data to be separated into rank order, as when the items in this study were ranked by the percentage of responses showing "agree." The higher levels of measurement, the interval scale and the ratio scale, were not achieved in this study; it was not possible to measure differences between the value of one item and another item, nor was it possible to define one item as being worth so many times another.





Barnes<sup>18</sup> is of the opinion "that the bulk of our judgments, scores and measurements in education cluster around the nominal and ordinal scales," and states that nonparametric tests are most useful with data of these types. This is supported by Selltiz et al.<sup>19</sup> who state that interval scales of measurement and normal distribution of characteristics are seldom met in social research. For these conditions, a "number of statistical tests have been developed. . . called nonparametric or distribution-free statistics."

For the purpose of this study it was decided to use the 0.05 level of significance. The intent of the report was to give an indication of where and to what extent role conflict existed. It was assumed that the 0.05 level would be adequate for this purpose, and that data from an opinion-type questionnaire did not warrant treatment at the one per cent level. This decision is supported by Selltiz et al.:

In the social sciences, it is more or less conventional to reject the null hypothesis when the statistical analysis indicates that the observed difference would not occur more than five times out of 100 by chance alone.<sup>20</sup>

The nominal scales obtained in this study were subjected to two operations. For Hypothesis I the responses to each item were considered separately and classified in accordance with the definition of "degree of conflict" given on page 11; this was a simple, descriptive process. For Hypothesis II the responses to an item were compared between principals, trustees, superintendents and secretary-treasurers, taken in pairs.

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<sup>18</sup>Barnes, op. cit., p. 79.      <sup>19</sup>Selltiz, et al., op. cit., p. 415.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 418.





Each pair of responses was placed in the two-by-two table and given the chi-square test for two independent samples as suggested by Barnes:

The Chi Square Test for Two Independent Samples may be used to determine the significance of difference between two independent groups. This test may be used when the data can be expressed as frequencies in separate classifications, and all cases can be accounted for among the classifications. The measurement involved may be as simple as nominal scaling. . . .Numbers of cases in the groups and in the several classifications do not necessarily have to be the same.<sup>21</sup>

The computations were performed in accordance with Ferguson, using Yates' correction for continuity for small numbers.<sup>22</sup>

Besides investigating response patterns for individual items, the items were ranked by frequency of agreement for each of the four groups of respondents. The four ordinal scales thus obtained were then subjected to the computations described by Ferguson to determine for each pair Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation with tied ranks; each coefficient was then tested for significance of difference at the 0.05 level.<sup>23</sup> It was assumed that significant difference between the ways two groups ranked the items would indicate the presence of role conflict to a sufficient extent to cause concern.

Ordinal scales and rank correlation were also used to determine whether or not the amounts of conflict between the elementary principals and each of the defined groups were separately related to the principals' characteristics of age, experience, certification, and attendance at

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<sup>21</sup>Barnes, op. cit., p. 95.

<sup>22</sup>George A. Ferguson, Statistical Analysis in Psychology and Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959), pp. 169-172.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 179-183.



administrative meetings.

### VIII. SUMMARY

An elementary principal occupies a formal position in the British Columbia School system with authority and responsibilities delegated by the school board and district superintendent. However, his job is usually defined in broad terms within which there may be disagreement among trustees, superintendents, secretary-treasurers, and the principals themselves. It was the purpose of this study to investigate these disagreements in a number of school districts all of which are small in pupil population as compared with city systems such as Vancouver and Edmonton. Data were obtained through the use of questionnaires designed by the investigator.

Questionnaires were sent out to 354 trustees, superintendents, secretary-treasurers, and elementary principals; 280 questionnaires were returned.

Data from the questionnaire responses were reduced to a nominal scale of agree-disagree responses, and also ranked. Response pattern comparisons were made by the chi-square test, and ranking comparisons by computing Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation. The 0.05 level of significance was adopted for the study. Four hypotheses were set up and tested.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### I. SOCIAL ROLE AND ROLE CONFLICT

Educational administration is a continuous exercise in human relations and an attempt to understand it can be made through the knowledge and language of the social sciences. In The Study of Man Linton,<sup>1</sup> an anthropologist, discusses the terms status and role. He suggests that the status of a person is really the sum of several statuses, ascribed and achieved, which he holds in society. When he acts the part required of a certain status he is assuming that role, his overall role being the sum of the roles attached to his statuses. Later he narrows his definitions so that status refers only to one position, with its accompanying role, according to the system in society that is being considered.<sup>2</sup> A person no longer has the status, but may have several statuses such as husband, father, manager, and club member, his role being "the sum total of the culture patterns associated with a particular status."

Thus, a status is a static position, while role is the dynamic expression of a position by its incumbent.

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<sup>1</sup>Ralph Linton, The Study of Man (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1936), pp. 113-115.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph Linton, The Cultural Background of Personality (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1945), p. 76.





Sarbin<sup>3</sup> refers to a person's position rather than status, and attaches to his position a set of expectations, namely, those things expected of him and the actions he may expect from others while he holds that position. These obligations and rights are the role expectations of the occupant of the position. Stogdill<sup>4</sup> suggests that these expectations are determined by cultural, personal and situational factors, while the behaviour associated with any position may be required, prohibited, or permitted. He points out that a leader in a formal organization is confronted with several sets of demands and expectations. Morin,<sup>5</sup> referring to school principals, states that these expectations are held by departmental officials, superintendents, directors, supervisors, fellow-principals, teachers, parents and students. The incumbent will also have his own ideas of appropriate action for his role. Morin suggests, therefore, that "the behavior of an individual principal will be predisposed by his own concept, or perception, of his role, based in part upon his perception of the expectations held for his position by reference groups, in part upon his perception of the formal, written requirements of his position, and in part upon his desire to gratify his own pattern of need-disposition, . . ."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Theodore R. Sarbin, "Role Theory," Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol. I, Gardner Lindzey, editor (Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1954), pp. 223-255.

<sup>4</sup>Ralph M. Stogdill et al., Leadership and Role Expectations (Columbus, Ohio: Bureau of Business Research, Ohio State University, 1956), pp. 1-5.

<sup>5</sup>L. H. Morin, "Role Perception and Principals," The Canadian Administrator, IV:5 (February, 1965), p. 17.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 18.



Role conflict. Stogdill<sup>7</sup> points out that successive occupants of the same position may not play identical roles and suggests that positions define sets of highly generalized and stabilized expectations relative to purpose, while roles define short range, changing expectations relative to performance. It follows that some measure of conflict is likely to arise when roles are being enacted, since local performance will differ and appear at times not to conform to the stabilized expectations. Sources of role conflict were ascribed by Cuber<sup>8</sup> to differences between roles held simultaneously by the same person, for example, a woman who is both a wife and a mother, to confusion in society with respect to what the given role requires, and to discontinuity such as when a teacher is appointed to a principalship but has not been trained for his new position. Stogdill<sup>9</sup> maintains that resolution of the leader's own and other people's role conflicts may be one of the major challenges of leadership.

Gross, McEachern, and Mason,<sup>10</sup> limiting role conflicts to situations in which an incumbent is confronted with incompatible expectations, develop a theory of role-conflict resolution by considering the legitimacy

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<sup>7</sup>Ralph M. Stogdill, "Intragroup-Intergroup Theory and Research," Intergroup Relations and Leadership, Muzafer Sherif, editor (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962), p. 62.

<sup>8</sup>John F. Cuber, Sociology: A Synopsis of Principles (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959), p. 288.

<sup>9</sup>Ralph M. Stogdill et al., Leadership and Role Expectations (Columbus, Ohio: Bureau of Business Research, Ohio State University, 1956), pp. 1-5.

<sup>10</sup>Neal Gross, Alexander W. McEachern, and Ward S. Mason, "Role Conflict and Its Resolution," Readings in Social Psychology, Eleanor E. Macoby et al., editors (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1958), pp. 447-459.





or otherwise of the expectations. They define a legitimate expectation as a perceived obligation, while the opposite is a perceived pressure. Rewards or punishments arising from the incumbency are referred to as sanctions. It is then postulated that a person will resolve a role conflict according to whether he gives preference to the legitimacy of the expectation or to the sanction involved, or to the "net balance" he perceives.

Cuber<sup>11</sup> notes that persons are not always aware of conflicts but that these usually affect the subconscious and cause a sense of uneasiness. According to Morin,<sup>12</sup> the importance of accurate perception cannot be overstressed, while inaccurate perception may result in antagonism among influential reference groups.

## II. ROLE CONFLICT: RELATED STUDIES

Gross, Mason and McEachern<sup>13</sup> postulated that there is a false "assumption that consensus exists on the expectations applied to the incumbent of particular social positions." In a well documented chapter they point out that "theoretically grounded empirical inquiries are needed to determine how much agreement there is on the expectations for the behavior of position incumbents."<sup>14</sup> Research problems in role analysis could be at two levels. Investigations could be made as to how

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<sup>11</sup>Cuber, op. cit., p. 290.      <sup>12</sup>Morin, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>13</sup>Neal Gross, Ward Mason, and Alexander McEachern, Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), p. 21.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 43.





the individual defines a role and what expectations the individual holds for a position incumbent. At the group level, it could be determined what expectations are held by group members for a position incumbent, and what expectations the position incumbent thinks are held for him by incumbents of counter positions.<sup>15</sup> It is from differences in these expectations that the problem of perceived role conflict arises.

Getzels and Guba<sup>16</sup> considered the teaching situation and set out to answer such questions as: What are the general expectations held for the teacher role? How do they accord with the other roles the teacher occupies? In what ways are they inconsistent? A conflict instrument requiring answers on a six-point scale was administered to 344 school teachers, with a 48 per cent response. They reported that some role conflicts are independent of local conditions and are found in all teaching situations, others vary with the situation and appear to depend on local conditions affecting the teaching situation, while a third group of conflicts are only of local importance and probably bear no relationship to the general teaching situation.

O'Brien<sup>17</sup> showed that principals often believe they are not performing as they would wish to if conflicting tasks did not interfere, and

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>16</sup>J. W. Getzels and E. G. Guba, "The Structure of Roles and Role Conflicts in the Teaching Situation," Journal of Educational Sociology, XXIX (September, 1955), pp. 30-40.

<sup>17</sup>P. B. O'Brien, "A Survey of the Positions of the Principal and Vice-Principal in British Columbia Schools"(unpublished Master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 1959).



that the number of duties and the time spent on each is too varied and too dependent on the specific situation for a detailed breakdown.

Warren<sup>18</sup> investigated the degree of consensus on the expectations for eighteen high school principals as expressed by themselves and eighty-nine teachers in their schools. The instrument used allowed a five-choice answer ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," and analysis of the data obtained showed there was a high degree of consensus on the principal's human relations role, but a low degree on his supervisory responsibilities.

Cheal<sup>19</sup> studied the problem of role conflict in the high school principalship using pupils, parents, and superintendents as well as teachers as alter groups, and an instrument with a simple choice of "agree," "disagree," or "no preference." In all areas investigated, conflict was discovered, disclosing a dilemma which the principal in some way or other had to resolve.

To determine their expectations of the provincially appointed superintendents of schools in Alberta, Finlay and Reeves<sup>20</sup> contacted

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<sup>18</sup>P. J. Warren, "Leadership Expectations of the Principal in Newfoundland's Regional and Central High Schools as Perceived by Principals and Staffs" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1959).

<sup>19</sup>J. Cheal, "Role Conflict in the Principalship of the Composite High School" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1960).

<sup>20</sup>J. H. Finlay and A. W. Reeves, "Expectations of School Boards for the Role of the Provincially Appointed Superintendent of Schools in Alberta," Alberta Journal of Educational Research, VII:2 (June, 1961), pp. 74-80.





324 school board members, who were asked to signify one of the following for each of forty-four tasks:

1. The superintendent should perform this duty independently.
2. He should be responsible for the performance of this duty under the direction of the board.
3. The superintendent should be expected to act in an advisory capacity in this case.
4. This should not be considered a responsibility of the superintendent.

It was found that, contrary to the normal business type of board "which exercises control without getting involved in the machinery of operation," many school trustees expected to act as administrators as far as non-professional staff and finance were concerned. They were, however, willing to leave educational leadership to the superintendent. The authors state that it would be interesting to compare this idea of the superintendent's role with that expected by schools of administration, teachers, citizens, and the superintendents themselves.

Miklos<sup>21</sup> supports the contention that a principal should be sensitive to the degree of consensus on the expectations the teachers in his school hold for his behaviour. It was found that variations existed between schools, and that the amount of consensus within schools varied. From data collected about the principals themselves, it was concluded that "effective administrative behavior is based on a realistic interpretation of the situation in which the administrator finds himself and

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<sup>21</sup>E. Miklos, "Role Theory in Administration," The Canadian Administrator, III:2 (November, 1963), pp. 5-8.





not on misconceptions or stereotypes of the situation." After suggesting ways in which expectations may be determined, the author considers the possibility of influencing those whose expectations do not appear to be in the best interests of the organization as perceived by the role-incumbent. In this respect, Van Miller<sup>22</sup> points out that the principal has the ability to influence the staff and pupils within his school by professional competence and the manner in which he carries out his responsibilities. While these attributes are also recognized outside the school, the principal's influence there will likely depend on such things as affiliation with groups, community service, and length of residence in the neighbourhood. Professor Van Miller does not, however, offer any research evidence to support these opinions. Also in this respect, principals should be encouraged by Lipham's recognition that "the group is likely to modify the individual much less than the individual will modify the group."<sup>23</sup>

Odynak<sup>24</sup> examined special interest groups because he believed they were of concern to the administrator and concluded that many such groups are controlled by interested minorities. In these cases, the administrator is advised to establish contact and rapport through the active minority.

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<sup>22</sup>Van Miller, Professor of Education, University of Illinois, "Power, People and Principals," The National Elementary Principal, XLI:4 (January, 1962), p. 16.

<sup>23</sup>J. M. Lipham, "Dynamics of the Principalsip," The National Elementary Principal, XLI:4 (January, 1962), p. 29.

<sup>24</sup>S. N. Odynak and F. Enns, "Special Interest Groups," The Canadian Administrator, III:5 (February, 1964).



Reaction to proposed decisions can be gauged in this manner, and the administrator with his better understanding may make better decisions. Modifying the expectations or understanding of the members of the active minority may, in turn, facilitate taking political or administrative action which would have been impossible otherwise.

### III. SUMMARY

Writers in the field agree that application of the theory of social role has assisted in examining administrative structure in general, and has suggested certain requirements for persons holding positions of responsibility.

As an administrator, the school principal should recognize that many groups expect things of him, and that often these expectations are in conflict, either with each other, or with his own ideas, or both. Odynak and Enns<sup>25</sup> insist that at least

He must recognize the existence of interest groups. He may not be able to do anything about them, and indeed may not wish to. The mere satisfaction of recognizing them and understanding their actions may be sufficient. However, it may be necessary or desirable at times to work with such groups or to try to modify their expectations.

Most researchers in this area suggest that the principal should attempt to modify expectations. Outside the school, this will be assisted by a strong public relations program such as Ingram<sup>26</sup> describes. Within the school, Downey<sup>27</sup> believes that this can be done by assuming

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>26</sup>E. J. Ingram, "The Principal and Public Relations," The Task of the Principal, 1963 Alberta Principals' Leadership Course, F. Enns, editor (Edmonton, Alberta; 1963), pp. 39-47.

<sup>27</sup>L. W. Downey, "Statesmanship in Education," Skills of an Effective Principal, 1961 Alberta Principals' Leadership Course, L. W. Downey, editor (Edmonton, Alberta; 1961), p. 135.



the role of "change-agent," when the principal:

. . .Will develop a keen sensitivity for change in his organization. . .he will become skillful in dealing with organizational resistance to change; and he will know how to maintain a sense of direction, a state of equilibrium as he constantly seeks ways and means of improving his enterprise.

At the same time, the principal must be prepared to modify his own ideas in the light of experience, research evidence, and the perceived expectations of individuals and groups interested in his position.







## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS, HYPOTHESIS I: CONFLICT OF EXPECTATIONS WITHIN GROUPS

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the analysis in this study was to determine statistically from the questionnaire data if and where role conflicts existed in the elementary principalship within the four task areas of organization and structure, school-community relations, staff personnel, and business management. A further purpose was to determine if conflicts which did exist were related to the responding principals' personal characteristics of age, experience, certification, and attendance at administrative meetings. As the study was confined to the elementary principals, district superintendents, secretary-treasurers, and school trustees of thirty school districts in the interior of British Columbia, the results of the analysis should be similarly confined, although they may indicate what might be found elsewhere.

This chapter describes the treatment of the data in testing the first hypothesis, namely, that there would be conflicting expectations for certain tasks of the elementary principal among elementary principals themselves, among district superintendents, among school trustees, and among secretary-treasurers. The results of the analysis are described, both in terms of the hypothesis in general, and with regard to the four task areas separately.



## II. TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The five possible responses to each item on the questionnaire-- Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree--were arbitrarily reduced to the simple dichotomy of "agree" for the first two responses and "disagree" for the last two. Neutral responses were ignored on the basis that they had served their purpose by allowing respondents an alternative to an "agree" or "disagree" reply, thus making it more likely that actual "agree" or "disagree" replies were true expressions of opinion.

For each of the twenty items in the questionnaire, the numbers of "agree" and "disagree" responses were counted for each responding group and converted to percentages of the totals for each group. For example, of the twenty district superintendents who answered the questionnaire, six agreed that the elementary principal should be considered more as an executive of the school board than as one of the teachers, ten disagreed, and four remained neutral; for this item, 30 per cent agreed, 50 per cent disagreed, and 20 per cent were neutral in the responding group of district superintendents.

The differences between the percentages of "agree" and "disagree" responses were then found for each item within each responding group; in the example quoted, this was a difference of 20 per cent. A small percentage difference meant that there was a relatively small difference in the number of respondents agreeing and the number disagreeing, indicating a high degree of conflict. For example, if 50 per cent of a group agreed and the other 50 per cent disagreed, there would be zero



difference in numerical response, but maximum conflict within that group on the question involved. On the other hand, a large difference in responses would indicate a small amount of conflict because most of the respondents would have agreed or disagreed with the statement. If every response to an item indicated agreement, or if every response indicated disagreement, there would be a difference of 100 per cent and zero conflict.

To describe the responses to each item, three degrees of conflict were arbitrarily chosen for this study as:

1. Low Conflict . . . . . Differences from 100 per cent to  
67 per cent;
2. Medium Conflict . . . . . Differences from 66 per cent to  
34 per cent;
3. High Conflict . . . . . Differences from 33 per cent to  
nil.

To simplify comparisons involving degrees of conflict, arbitrary "conflict scores" were assigned: "zero" for low conflict, "one" for medium conflict, and "two" for high conflict within responding groups.

### Findings

The results of reducing the responses to percentages of agreement and disagreement are shown in Table II. It was found that, within each of the four groups of respondents, there were no cases of complete disagreement. There were three cases of complete agreement: once each by principals and secretary-treasurers, who all agreed that the principal should have sufficient freedom from teaching and clerical duties to







TABLE II  
RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS, BY PERCENTAGES,  
WITHIN REFERENCE GROUPS

Items	Elementary Principals		Superintendents		School Trustees		Secretary-Treasurers	
The Elementary Principal Should:	PA	PD	PA	PD	PA	PD	PA	PD <sup>a</sup>
<u>Organization and Structure</u>								
1. Be considered more as an executive of the School Board than as one of the teachers.	12	83	30	50	62	32	68	23
2. Cease to be a member of the B.C.T.F. when appointed	5	94	10	80	61	23	73	14
3. Share with the other principals in attending Board meetings	81	6	70	10	77	12	73	14
4. Be prepared to offer professional advice at Board meetings	96	1	90	5	95	3	95	5
5. Refer <u>all</u> experimentation to his Superintendent	31	61	80	20	61	26	59	18
6. Maintain liaison on educational matters with the Board through his Superintendent	84	7	95	5	85	8	95	5
7. Deal with the Board on professional matters through his professional association	70	13	40	35	29	47	55	23
<u>School-Community Relations</u>								
8. Be a member of at least one community organization	72	12	60	0	63	5	41	9
9. Initiate or maintain a local P.T.A.	45	25	50	15	58	8	47	9
10. Keep his community informed more than by bulletins via pupils	76	11	90	5	71	11	91	5

<sup>a</sup>PA--Percentage Agreeing; PD--Percentage Disagreeing.



TABLE II (Continued)

The Elementary Principal Should:	Elementary Principals		Superin- tendents		School Trustees		Secretary- Treasurers	
	PA	PD	PA	PD	PA	PD	PA	PD <sup>a</sup>
<u>Staff Personnel</u>								
11. Be consulted before new staff appointments	99	0	95	0	83	10	86	5
12. Set out in writing the duties delegated to his vice-principal	65	12	80	10	86	3	82	9
13. Initiate or maintain a Policy Handbook	66	8	85	0	73	6	68	5
14. Chair all staff meetings when present	64	18	50	30	75	12	82	9
15. At his superintendent's discretion, make written reports on his teachers, whatever the size of his school	49	42	65	30	86	4	86	9
<u>Business Management</u>								
16. Maintain liaison on business matters with the Board through the Secretary-Treasurer	83	7	100	0	89	7	95	5
17. Have sufficient freedom from teaching and clerical duties	100	0	95	5	97	1	100	0
18. Have a large degree of freedom in ordering teaching supplies and library books	99	0	95	5	78	11	95	5
19. Be a member of the committee which makes recommendations for the budget of his school	88	2	95	5	88	4	91	5
20. Be expected to work beyond the normal school year	67	23	90	10	74	13	91	0

<sup>a</sup>PA--Percentage Agreeing; PD--Percentage Disagreeing.



enable him to be conversant with the learning situation in the classrooms, and once by superintendents who all agreed that the principal should maintain liaison on business matters with the board through the secretary-treasurer. Apart from these three cases, there were conflicting expectations relative to every task surveyed. Ten cases showed percentage differences of 33 per cent or less (high conflict), twenty-six cases showed differences between 34 per cent and 66 per cent (medium conflict), and forty-four cases, more than half the total, showed differences greater than 66 per cent (low conflict).

Examination of the distribution of degrees of conflict showed that approximately the same number of items appeared for each responding group under each category of low, medium, and high, and that these numbers decreased in each case from low conflict to high conflict, as follows:

	Low Conflict	Medium Conflict	High Conflict
Principals	10	7	3
Superintendents	12	5	3
Trustees	10	8	2
Secretaries	12	6	2

### III. WITHIN-GROUP CONFLICT IN THE FOUR TASK AREAS

#### The Data Related to the Four Task Areas

The twenty statements in the questionnaire were confined to four areas of the elementary principalship. These areas concerned organization and structure, school-community relations, staff personnel, and business management. To simplify conflict comparisons between these areas,







the degrees of conflict already established in this study were given arbitrary scores of "zero" for low conflict, "one" for medium conflict, and "two" for high conflict. Averaging of total conflict scores for each area was necessitated by the different numbers of statements in each of the task areas. Since there were four groups of respondents, the maximum possible conflict score for any one item, or for an area average, would be "eight," and this would be attained if each group registered high conflict within itself. The minimum possible conflict score would be "zero," which would be attained if each group registered low conflict.

#### Within-Group Conflict in the Area of Organization and Structure

This task area included items one to seven on the questionnaire. These items were concerned with ways in which the elementary principal related professionally to his district superintendent and school board. In the majority of cases--sixteen out of twenty-eight--there was high or medium conflict of expectations. Trustees registered two cases of high conflict and three of medium conflict. Secretary-treasurers registered one case of high conflict and four of medium conflict. Superintendents registered two cases of high conflict and two of medium conflict. Principals registered one case of high conflict and one of medium conflict.

Conflict scores, when totalled, indicated that trustees registered the greatest amount of conflict, and principals the least. The average conflict score for the four responding groups in the task area was 3.1. The results are shown in Table III.



TABLE III  
DEGREES OF CONFLICT WITHIN GROUPS IN THE AREA OF  
ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Items The Elementary Principal Should:	Degree of Conflict Among				Conflict Score <sup>a</sup>
	Princi- pals	Superin- tendents	School Trustees	Secre- taries	
Be more board executive than teacher	Low	High	High	Medium	5
Cease to belong to teachers' association	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	2
Attend board meetings	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	3
Offer professional advice at board meetings	Low	Low	Low	Low	0
Refer experimentation to superintendent	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	5
Maintain liaison on educa- tional matters through superintendent	Low	Low	Low	Low	0
Deal with board on profes- sional matters through professional association	Medium	High	High	High	7
Conflict Score Totals	3	6	7	6	22
Average Conflict Score: 3.1.					

<sup>a</sup>Low scores 0; Medium scores 1; High scores 2.



The analysis showed that two items in the area of organization and structure registered low conflict within all responding groups. Both items dealt with communication channels on educational matters between the principal and the board. Most respondents agreed in the one item that principals attending board meetings should be prepared to offer professional advice, and in the other that normal liaison with the board on educational matters should be maintained through the district superintendent. This indicated that there was general agreement within school district administrations as to the correct channels of communication for educational matters.

Most conflict of expectations within the responding groups was registered on the item concerned with how a principal should deal with his board on professional matters. Principals registered medium conflict on this point, a majority agreeing with the notion that they should deal with the board through an association. Superintendents and secretary-treasurers registered high conflict, with a small majority in each group agreeing. School trustees also registered high conflict, but in their case the majority did not agree with the suggestion that the channel of communication should be through the principal's professional association.

#### Within-Group Conflict in the Area of School-Community Relations

This task area included items eight, nine, and ten. These items were concerned with the ways in which the principal relates to his public. This area is not concerned so closely with the professional relations between principals and board as the area of organization and







structure. It is an area, however, in which most respondents will be playing a dual role of member of the school administration on the one hand, and member-at-large of the community on the other. Many will also have the role of parent of a school-age child. This plurality of roles may have been a contributing factor to the high incidence of conflict in the area: eight cases of medium conflict and two cases of high conflict, but only two cases of low conflict. The average conflict score was 4.0. The results are shown in Table IV.

Conflict scores, when totalled, indicated no marked differences between the response patterns of the four responding groups. Principals scored a total of four, trustees and secretary-treasurers a total of three each, and superintendents two.

The suggestion that an elementary principal should be a member of at least one community organization other than a church or his professional association gave rise to high conflict among secretary-treasurers and to medium conflict among the other responding groups. In all groups, the majority was in favour of the suggestion.

The suggestion that an elementary principal should initiate or maintain a local Parent-Teacher Association gave rise to high conflict among principals, and to medium conflict among superintendents, secretary-treasurers, and trustees. Again, the majority in each group was in favour of the suggestion.

Most respondents also agreed that the principal should keep his community informed about school matters in more ways than by sending bulletins home with pupils. Secretary-treasurers and superintendents registered low conflict on this item, trustees and principals medium



TABLE IV  
DEGREES OF CONFLICT WITHIN GROUPS IN THE AREA OF  
SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Items	Degree of Conflict Among				Conflict Score <sup>a</sup>
	Princi- pals	Superin- tendents	School Trustees	Secre- taries	
The Elementary Principal Should:					
Be a member of at least one community organiza- tion	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	5
Initiate or maintain a local Parent-Teacher Association	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	5
Keep his community informed in more ways than bulletins via pupils	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	2
Conflict Score Totals	4	2	3	3	12
Average Conflict Score: 4.0					

<sup>a</sup>Low scores 0; Medium scores 1; High scores 2.



conflict. A number of neutral responses from trustees and principals on the item may have contributed statistically to the registering of medium conflict.

#### Within-Group Conflict in the Area of Staff Personnel

This task area included items eleven to fifteen on the questionnaire. The tasks related to the teachers as a staff in an individual school, and dealt with the internal administration of the school. Principals registered the greatest amount of within-group conflict, superintendents followed; trustees and secretary-treasurers registered the least conflict. The average conflict score was 2.0. The results for this area are set out in Table V. In every case in this area the majority of respondents agreed with the tasks as stated.

A total conflict score of one showed that there was general consensus that principals should be consulted before new teachers are appointed to their schools, and that they should set out in writing the duties of vice-principals where appointed.

Trustees and superintendents registered low conflict, principals and secretary-treasurers registered medium conflict, on the topic of initiation and maintenance of a policy handbook for each school.

Secretary-treasurers registered low conflict over the principal's chairing all staff meetings when he is present. Trustees and principals showed medium conflict within their groups, and superintendents were in high conflict over the item.

Under the present School Law in British Columbia, the principal of a public school with ten or more classes reports in writing to the







TABLE V  
DEGREES OF CONFLICT WITHIN GROUPS IN THE AREA OF  
STAFF PERSONNEL

Items The Elementary Principal Should:	Degree of Conflict Among				Conflict Score <sup>a</sup>
	Princi- pals	Superin- tendents	School Trustees	Secre- taries	
Be consulted on staff appointments	Low	Low	Low	Low	0
Write out duties of vice-principal	Medium	Low	Low	Low	1
Maintain school Policy Handbook	Medium	Low	Low	Medium	2
Chair staff meetings if present	Medium	High	Medium	Low	4
At his superintendent's discretion, write reports on his teachers, whatever the size of his school	High	Medium	Low	Low	3
Conflict Score Totals	5	3	1	1	10
Average Conflict Score: 2.0					

<sup>a</sup>Low scores 0; Medium scores 1; High scores 2.



district superintendent on the work of his teachers. The suggestion that this requirement should be extended to schools of all sizes, at the superintendent's discretion, was well received by trustees and secretary-treasurers. It gave rise to medium conflict among superintendents, and among principals the item gave rise to the highest amount of within-group conflict reported in this study, 49 per cent agreeing and 42 per cent disagreeing with the suggestion.

#### Within-Group Conflict in the Area of Business Management

This task area included items sixteen to twenty of the questionnaire, all concerned with the operation of the business aspects of a school. Of the four task areas surveyed in this study, the area of business management produced the least amount of conflict within responding groups, there being only two cases of medium conflict and none of high conflict. The average conflict score was 0.4. The results are shown in Table VI. In every case in this area the majority of respondents agreed with the items.

The two cases of medium conflict were registered by principals and trustees on the question of the principal's being expected to work beyond the normal school year.

There was general consensus within groups that the elementary principal should maintain liaison on business matters with his board through the secretary-treasurer, that he should have sufficient freedom from teaching and clerical duties to enable him to be conversant with the learning situation in the classroom, that he should have a large degree of freedom in ordering such things as teaching supplies and



TABLE VI  
DEGREES OF CONFLICT WITHIN GROUPS IN THE AREA OF  
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Items	Degree of Conflict Among				Conflict Score <sup>a</sup>
	Princi- pals	Superin- tendents	School Trustees	Secre- taries	
The Elementary Principal Should:					
Maintain business liaison with the board through the secretary-treasurer	Low	Low	Low	Low	0
Have sufficient freedom from teaching and clerical duties	Low	Low	Low	Low	0
Have a large degree of freedom in ordering teaching supplies and library books	Low	Low	Low	Low	0
Belong to school budget committee	Low	Low	Low	Low	0
Be expected to work beyond the normal school year	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	2
Conflict Score Totals	1	0	1	0	2
Average Conflict Score: 0.4					

<sup>a</sup>Low scores 0; Medium scores 1; High scores 2.





library books within his overall budget, and that he should be a member of the committee which makes recommendations for the budget of his school.

#### Comparison of Task Areas by Conflict Within Groups

For any one item in the questionnaire, the total of conflict scores registered by the four responding groups could have had a maximum numerical value of eight and a minimum of zero. The analysis showed that the average conflict scores for the items in each task area were:

School-Community Relations . . . . .	4.0
Organization and Structure . . . . .	3.1
Staff Personnel . . . . .	2.0
Business Management . . . . .	0.4

The area of business management had a sufficiently small proportion, five per cent of the maximum possible conflict, to suggest that conflict within groups was not a problem in this area. The area of staff personnel had 25 per cent, organization and structure approximately 40 per cent, and school-community relations 50 per cent of the maximum possible conflict between groups in each area.

#### IV. COMPARISON OF INDIVIDUAL TASKS BY CONFLICT SCORES

To determine which tasks gave rise to the most conflict within groups, the items from the questionnaire were ranked in order of their total conflict scores for all responding groups as shown in Table VII.

No statement produced a maximum possible conflict score of eight, that is, high conflict within all responding groups. A conflict score



TABLE VII  
INDIVIDUAL TASKS RANKED BY CONFLICT SCORES

Conflict Score	Items		
	Rank	Questionnaire Number	Brief Description of Principal's Tasks
8			Nil
7	(1)	7	Deal on professional matters through professional association
6			Nil
5	(2)	1 5 8 9	More board executive than teacher Refer experimentation Join community organization Maintain a parent-teacher association
4	(3)	14	Chair all staff meetings
3	(4)	3	Attend board meetings Write teachers reports in small schools
2	(5)	2 10 13 20	Cease to belong to B.C.T.F. Information other than bulletins School policy handbook Work beyond normal year
1	(6)	12	Vice-principal's duties
0	(7)	4 6 11 16 17 18 19	Professional advice at board meetings Educational matters through superintendent New staff appointments Business matters through secretary Freedom from teaching Ordering supplies School budget committee



of seven was registered on the statement that the elementary principal should deal with his board on professional matters through his professional association.

Tasks concerned with the executive position of the principal, referral of experimentation to the superintendent, belonging to a community organization, and parent-teacher associations, all registered a conflict score of five.

The suggestion about chairing staff meetings produced a conflict score of four, or half the possible maximum. The principal's attendance at board meetings, and his writing of reports on teachers, each produced conflict scores of three.

Items dealing with the principal's membership in the teachers' professional association, getting information to the community, developing and maintaining a policy handbook, and working beyond the normal school year, all registered conflict scores of two; defining the vice-principal's duties registered one.

Low conflict within all groups, yielding a conflict score of zero, was registered by the responses to seven tasks. In the area of organization and structure, majority agreement was expressed within all groups that the principal should be prepared to give professional advice if attending a school board meeting and that he should communicate with the board on educational matters through his district superintendent. The idea of the principal's being consulted before new staff appointments were made to his school also obtained majority approval. In the area of business management, majority agreement was expressed on four of







the questionnaire items by all groups. The items dealt with the ideas that the correct channel for business communications with the school board was through the secretary-treasurer, that the principal should have sufficient relief from teaching and clerical duties to enable him to be conversant with the learning situations in his classrooms, that he should have a large degree of freedom in ordering such things as teaching supplies within his budget, and that he should be a member of the committee which makes recommendations for the budget of his school.

## V. SUMMARY

Questionnaire responses to items dealing with twenty tasks in the elementary principalship in interior British Columbia were arranged to provide a nominal dichotomy of "agree" and "disagree" responses. Actual numbers of responses were reduced to percentages for each task, and "degrees of conflict" were substituted for percentage differences. The amount of conflict within each responding group on each of the tasks was thus put into a category of "high," "medium," or "low."

Hypothesis I for this study stated that there would be conflicting expectations for certain tasks of the elementary principal among elementary principals, district superintendents, school trustees, and secretary-treasurers. Out of a possible eighty cases, only three response patterns showed complete agreement and none complete disagreement, so conflict of some degree was evident in the remainder. The hypothesis was, therefore, accepted.

There were forty-four cases of low conflict, twenty-six cases of



medium conflict, and ten cases of high conflict, with approximately similar distributions of degrees of conflict throughout each responding group. This suggested that distribution of conflict diminished in extent as it increased in degree.

A survey of the results within the four task areas included in this study showed that tasks involving school-community relations produced the most conflict within groups. Those involving organization and structure followed, with those about staff personnel third. The task area of business management produced so little evidence of conflict that, within the limits of this study, it could be ignored as a source of conflict of expectations.

The findings in support of Hypothesis I suggest that an elementary principal could assume that there will be varying expectations regarding some of his individual tasks and responsibilities among trustees, secretary-treasurers, superintendents, and his own colleagues. This lack of consensus among the various other groups holding expectations for him makes it difficult for the principal to define his own role.



## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS, HYPOTHESIS II: CONFLICT OF EXPECTATIONS BETWEEN GROUPS

#### I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the treatment of the data used to test the second hypothesis, that there would be conflicting expectations on individual aspects of the job of the elementary principal between all possible pairs of responding groups. The results of the analysis are described in relation to the hypothesis in general, and as related to the four task areas and to the individual tasks.

#### II. TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The dichotomy of "agree" and "disagree" responses obtained for Hypothesis I was employed, the actual numbers of responses being used rather than the percentages. Ratios of "agree" and "disagree" responses between the six possible pairs of four responding groups were compared for each item of the questionnaire to determine if any pair of ratios was significantly independent. For this purpose, the chi-square test, as described by Ferguson,<sup>1</sup> was used, in which

$$\text{Chi-square} = \frac{N(AD - BC)^2}{(A + B)(C + D)(A + C)(B + D)}$$

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<sup>1</sup>George A. Ferguson, Statistical Analysis in Psychology and Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), p. 169.







where chi-square for the 0.05 level of confidence is 3.84, and

$$H_0 : p_I - p_{II} = 0; \quad H_1 : p_I \neq p_{II}$$

Where any frequency of response was five or less, Yate's correction for continuity, which reduced the numerical value of the term  $(AD - BC)$  by  $N/2$ , was applied as recommended by Ferguson.<sup>2</sup>

In accordance with the definition adopted for this study, any pair of responses tested and found significantly independent at the 0.05 level of confidence was regarded as "demonstrating "significant conflict" between the two responding groups in the item concerned.

### Findings

Out of a possible maximum of one hundred twenty cases, twenty-three cases of significant conflict were revealed. Nine cases of significant conflict occurred between principals and trustees, five between principals and secretary-treasurers, four between superintendents and trustees, three between principals and superintendents, and one each between secretary-treasurers and superintendents, and between trustees and superintendents. The hypothesis that there would be conflicting expectations on individual aspects of the elementary principalship between responding groups was, therefore, accepted.

Although there was a possible maximum of one hundred twenty cases of significant conflict, each responding group could only be involved in a maximum of sixty--that is, on twenty items with each of the other three groups. The results showed that principals were

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 171.



involved in seventeen cases of significant conflict, trustees in fourteen, superintendents in eight, and secretary-treasurers in seven.

Results of the chi-square tests for all pairs on all items are given in Appendix E, Table XXVI.

It will be noted that no measure of degree of conflict was applied to the findings for this hypothesis. The chi-square test was used simply to determine whether or not significant conflict did exist at the 0.05 level of confidence, the level adopted for this study; it did not indicate the intensity of the disagreement that existed.

### III. BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT IN THE FOUR TASK AREAS

Neither conflict scores nor degree of conflict, as defined in this study, are used in testing Hypothesis II. Comparisons are made, therefore, on a descriptive basis or by the use of percentages of possible maximums.

#### Between-Group Conflict in the Area of Organization and Structure

This task area included items one to seven of the questionnaire. These items were concerned with ways in which the elementary principal related professionally to his district superintendent and school board. It would, therefore, appear to be a fruitful area for differing expectations between these groups, the school board here including trustees and secretary-treasurer. However, of the seven items in this area, the three concerned with the principal's attendance at board meetings, his offering of professional advice to the board, and his dealing with educational matters through the superintendent, all registered no





significant conflict between any pairs of groups.

In contrast to these three items, four cases of significant conflict were produced by the question of the principal's being the board's executive, principals conflicting with each of the other groups, and superintendents conflicting with trustees. Four cases of significant conflict were also produced by the question of the principal's membership in the teachers' professional association, in this instance between principals and trustees, principals and secretary-treasurers. The majorities of trustees and secretary-treasurers agreed that the principal should be more executive than teacher, and should leave the teachers' association, while the majorities of principals and superintendents disagreed with these ideas.

#### Between-Group Conflict in the Area of School-Community Relations

This task area included items eight, nine, and ten of the questionnaire; these items were concerned with some of the ways in which the principal relates to his public.

Item eight, concerned with the principal's being a member of a community organization, and item ten, concerned with the principal's keeping the community informed on school affairs, produced no significant conflict.

The idea of the principal's initiating or maintaining a local parent-teacher association produced the only instance of significant conflict in this area, and was between principals and trustees; a substantial minority of principals disagreed with this suggestion.





Between-Group Conflict in the Area of Staff Personnel

This task area included items eleven to fifteen of the questionnaire, and related to that part of the internal administration of the school which concerned the teaching staff.

Of the six instances of significant conflict in this area, three occurred over a single item. Although the majority of respondents in each group agreed with the suggestion that, at his superintendent's discretion, the elementary principal should make written reports on his teachers whatever the size of the school, the large majorities of trustees and secretary-treasurers produced significant conflict of expectations between principals and (a) trustees, and (b) secretary-treasurers, and between superintendents and trustees.

The other three cases of significant conflict arose from three separate items. The suggestion that the principal should be consulted before new appointments are made to his school received a larger majority of responses in agreement from the principals than from the trustees, sufficiently so to cause significant conflict between the two groups. The response pattern to the idea of the principal's defining his vice-principal's duties was reversed, a larger majority of agree responses from the trustees than from the principals again causing significant conflict between the groups. On the question of chairing staff meetings, a larger majority of trustees than of superintendents agreed that this should be one of the principal's tasks, so causing significant conflict between the two groups.



### Between-Group Conflict in the Area of Business Management

This task area included items sixteen to twenty of the questionnaire, all concerned with the operation of the business aspect of a school. Only two cases of significant conflict occurred in the area of business management. The idea of the principal's having a large degree of freedom in ordering supplies and books within the school's budget caused significant conflict between trustees and principals, the latter group having the larger majority of responses in agreement. Although the expectation for the principal to work beyond the school year met with agreement from all groups, the smaller proportion of principals caused significant conflict between them and the secretary-treasurers.

### Comparison of Task Areas by Conflict Between Groups

The task area of organization and structure produced the most conflict between groups, fourteen cases of significant conflict or 33 per cent of the maximum possible. Staff personnel items produced 20 per cent of the maximum possible with six cases of significant conflict. The areas of business management and school-community relations were the lowest producers of significant conflict, with two cases or seven per cent, and one case or six per cent of the possible number, respectively.

## IV. COMPARISON OF INDIVIDUAL TASKS BY CONFLICT BETWEEN GROUPS

To determine which individual suggestions gave rise to the most between-group conflict, the items from the questionnaire were ranked in order of the number of cases of significant conflict they produced. The maximum possible number was six for any one item; the results showed





that no item registered significant conflict between more than four pairs of groups of respondents. Table VIII shows the tasks ranked by numbers of significant conflicts.

Of the twenty tasks surveyed, only eleven produced significant conflict between groups. Which groups of respondents conflicted with what other groups on each of these eleven tasks is shown in tabular form in this section of the study. Those tasks which registered one or more instances of significant conflict between groups are discussed in this section, in the same order as they rank in Table VIII.

Principals conflicted with all their alter groups, and superintendents conflicted with trustees, on the idea of the principal's being considered more as an executive of the board than as one of the teachers. This is shown in Table IX, page 58. Principals and superintendents each conflicted with trustees and secretary-treasurers on the suggestion that, when he is appointed to the principalship, the incumbent should cease to be a member of the teachers' professional association. This is shown in Table X, page 58. The majorities of principals and superintendents disagreed with both these ideas, while the majorities of trustees and secretary-treasurers agreed with the ideas.

As shown in Table XI, page 59, principals conflicted with all their alter groups on the suggestion that the elementary principal should refer all experimentation in his school to the district superintendent before allowing it to be undertaken. In this case, the majority of principals again disagreed with the idea, while the majority of each alter group agreed with it.

Table XII, page 59, shows that principals were in conflict with





TABLE VIII  
INDIVIDUAL TASKS RANKED BY SIGNIFICANT CONFLICT

Cases of Significant Conflict	Items		
	Rank	Questionnaire Number	Brief Description of Principal's Tasks
6			Nil
5			Nil
4	(1)	1	More board executive than teacher
		2	Cease to belong to teachers' association
3	(2)	5	Refer all experimentation
		7	Deal through professional association on professional matters
		15	Write teachers' reports in all schools
2			Nil
1	(3)	9	Maintain parent-teacher association
		11	Staff appointments to his school
		12	Defining vice-principal's duties
		14	Chair all staff meetings
		18	Freedom in ordering supplies
		20	Work beyond normal year
0	(4)	3	Attend board meetings
		4	Professional advice at board meetings
		6	Educational matters through superinten- dent
		8	Join community organization
		10	Information other than bulletins
		13	Maintain school policy handbook
		16	Business matters through secretary- treasurer
		17	Freedom from teaching and clerical duties
		19	Member of school budget committee



TABLE IX  
BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON THE EXECUTIVE POSITION OF THE PRINCIPAL

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Conflict	Conflict	Conflict
Superintendents		Conflict	Nil
Trustees			Nil

TABLE X  
BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON THE PRINCIPAL'S MEMBERSHIP  
IN THE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Nil	Conflict	Conflict
Superintendents		Conflict	Conflict
Trustees			Nil



TABLE XI  
BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON REFERRAL OF EXPERIMENTATION

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Conflict	Conflict	Conflict
Superintendents		Nil	Nil
Trustees			Nil

TABLE XII  
BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON PRINCIPAL'S DEALING WITH BOARD  
ON PROFESSIONAL MATTERS

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Conflict	Conflict	Nil
Superintendents		Nil	Nil
Trustees			Conflict





superintendents and trustees, and that secretary-treasurers were in conflict with trustees, on the manner in which the principal should communicate with his board on professional matters. The majority of trustees disagreed that this should be through the principal's professional association; the majorities in the other groups agreed with this suggestion.

At the time this survey was made, the principal of a British Columbia public school with ten or more classes was required to report in writing to the district superintendent on the work of his teachers. The suggestion that this requirement should be extended to schools of all sizes, at the superintendent's discretion, obtained a majority response in its favour from all groups. However, larger majorities from the trustees and secretary-treasurers caused significant conflict with the smaller majority from the principals; a similar, but less extensive, difference in the response patterns between trustees and superintendents caused significant conflict between these two groups. Table XIII shows these results.

A substantial minority of principals disagreed with their being expected to initiate or maintain a local Parent-Teacher Association and this created significant conflict with the trustees, as shown in Table XIV. Even so, one-third of the trustees made neutral responses on this question.

There was majority agreement from all groups on the idea that the principal should be consulted before new staff appointments are made to his school. However, Table XV, page 62, shows that significant conflict



TABLE XIII  
BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON THE WRITING OF REPORTS ON TEACHERS

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Nil	Conflict	Conflict
Superintendents		Conflict	Nil
Trustees			Nil

TABLE XIV  
BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON INITIATION OF A PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Nil	Conflict	Nil
Superintendents		Nil	Nil
Trustees			Nil



TABLE XV  
 BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON CONSULTATION WITH THE PRINCIPAL  
 BEFORE APPOINTING NEW TEACHERS

	Superintendent	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Nil	Conflict	Nil
Superintendents		Nil	Nil
Trustees			Nil





did arise between principals and trustees, the latter having the smaller proportion of agree responses.

The suggestion that elementary principals should define in writing the duties delegated to their vice-principals also obtained majority agreement from each group, but in this case the smallest proportion of agree responses came from the principals and the largest from the trustees. The differences in response patterns were sufficient to produce significant conflict between principals and trustees, as shown in Table XVI.

Majority agreement was obtained from each group with the idea that the principal, when he is present, should chair all staff meetings. A substantial minority of disagreeing superintendents caused significant conflict between their group and the trustees. This is shown in Table XVII.

The idea of the principal's having a large degree of freedom in ordering such things as teaching supplies and library books within the budget set for the school was well received by all groups. Trustees had the largest proportion of disagree responses; principals had none. Significant conflict was found only between trustees and principals, as shown in Table XVIII, page 65.

The majority of expressed opinions showed that all groups were in favour of the elementary principal's being expected to work beyond the normal school year. No secretary-treasurers were in disagreement with the idea, but one-third of the principals responding had reservations on this matter. As shown in Table XIX, page 65, principals and secretary-



TABLE XVI  
BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON DEFINING THE VICE-PRINCIPAL'S DUTIES

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Nil	Conflict	Nil
Superintendents		Nil	Nil
Trustees			Nil

TABLE XVII  
BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON CHAIRING STAFF MEETINGS

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Nil	Nil	Nil
Superintendents		Conflict	Nil
Trustees			Nil



TABLE XVIII

BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON THE PRINCIPAL'S FREEDOM IN ORDERING  
SUPPLIES AND LIBRARY BOOKS

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Nil	Conflict	Nil
Superintendents		Nil	Nil
Trustees			Nil

TABLE XIX

BETWEEN-GROUP CONFLICT ON EXPECTATION OF THE PRINCIPAL  
TO WORK BEYOND THE NORMAL SCHOOL YEAR

	Superintendents	Trustees	Secretaries
Principals	Nil	Nil	Conflict
Superintendents		Nil	Nil
Trustees			Nil





treasurers formed the only pair of groups to register significant between-group conflict on this item.

## V. SUMMARY

The nominal dichotomy of "agree" and "disagree" responses obtained from the data for Hypothesis I was used to compare responses between each pair of responding groups on each item in the questionnaire. Significance of independence was determined with the chi-square test at the 0.05 level of confidence. By the definition adopted for this study, each pair of responses with significant independence was taken as indicating "significant conflict" between that pair of groups responding to that questionnaire item.

Hypothesis II for this study stated that on individual aspects of the elementary principalship there would be conflicting expectations between:

1. Elementary principals and district superintendents;
2. Elementary principals and school trustees;
3. Elementary principals and secretary-treasurers;
4. District superintendents and school trustees;
5. District superintendents and secretary-treasurers;
6. School trustees and secretary-treasurers.

Analysis of the data revealed, in the same order as above:

1. Three cases of significant conflict between elementary principals and district superintendents;
2. Nine cases of significant conflict between elementary principals and school trustees;



3. Five cases of significant conflict between elementary principals and secretary-treasurers;
4. Four cases of significant conflict between district superintendents and school trustees;
5. One case of significant conflict between district superintendents and secretary-treasurers;
6. One case of significant conflict between secretary-treasurers and school trustees.

The hypothesis was, therefore, accepted, with the reservation that only one instance of significant conflict out of a possible twenty between two pairs of groups--secretary-treasurers and superintendents, secretary-treasurers and school trustees--was not serious.

Study of the results within the four task areas showed that the areas of organization and structure, and of staff personnel administration, gave rise to the most conflict between groups. The area of school-community relations gave rise to the smallest average of between-group conflict. This appeared to stem from the similarity of the response patterns from all groups in this area. The small amount of conflict between groups in the area of business management would support the suggestion made in Chapter III, that within the limits of this study it could be disregarded as a source of conflict.

When the conflicts on individual tasks were studied it was found that five tasks were responsible for most of the conflicts between groups. The tasks were those dealing with the executive position of the principal, the principal's ceasing to be a member of the teachers'





association, his referral of all experimentation to the district superintendent, his dealing with the school board on professional matters through a professional association, and his writing reports on teacher competence in small schools.

The findings in support of Hypothesis II show that an elementary principal should assume that expectations regarding some of his individual tasks and responsibilities may vary between himself, his colleagues, district superintendents, secretary-treasurers and school trustees. This lack of consensus between the various alter groups holding expectations for him, and between these alter groups and himself, makes it difficult for the principal to define his own role.



## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS, HYPOTHESES III AND IV: CORRELATION OF OVERALL EXPECTATIONS, AND CONFLICT RELATED TO CHARACTERISTICS OF PRINCIPALS

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The purposes of the analysis in this chapter were to determine statistically from the questionnaire data (a) whether there was conflict between any pair of the responding groups as to their overall expectations for the elementary principalship within the limits of this study, and (b) to determine if conflict between individual principals and each of the reference groups within their own districts was related to certain individual characteristics of the principals themselves, namely: age, experience, teacher certification, attendance at school board meetings, and attendance at administrators' meetings.

This chapter describes the statistical procedures used to test Hypotheses III and IV, and gives the results of the analysis. It also gives a description, by the characteristics surveyed, of the elementary principals who responded to this study.

#### II. TREATMENT OF THE DATA AND FINDINGS: HYPOTHESIS III

Hypothesis III stated that, when the individual tasks of the elementary principalship investigated in this study are considered together, there is no significant correlation of expectations between



each pair of responding groups, namely: principals, superintendents, trustees, and secretary-treasurers.

### Treatment of the Data

For each group of respondents, the twenty items in the questionnaire were ranked by frequency of the "agree" responses already obtained in the analysis described in Chapter III, that is, by combining "strongly agree" with "agree" responses and ignoring neutral responses.

The greatest number of principals to agree on any one item was eighty-three on the question of the principal's being relieved of teaching duties. Thus this item, number seventeen on the questionnaire, ranked first for principals. Item number two, dealing with the principal's membership in the teachers' association, received the least number of agree responses, so it was ranked last, or twentieth. Where two or more items had the same frequency response in any one group, the average of their ranks was taken. The rankings of all items for the four groups of respondents are shown in Table XX, together with their frequencies of "agree" responses.

For each pair of groups, six pairs in all, Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation,  $\rho$ , was computed and tested for significance at the 0.05 level of confidence against the appropriate critical value of  $t$  as described by Ferguson.<sup>1</sup>

### Findings for Hypothesis III

The greatest amount of statistical correlation on overall

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<sup>1</sup>George A. Ferguson, Statistical Analysis in Psychology and Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1959), pp. 179-183.





TABLE XX

## RESPONSES RANKED BY FREQUENCY OF AGREEMENT (f)

Item The Elementary Principal should:	Princi- pals f rank	Superin- tendents f rank	School Trustees f rank	Secre- taries f rank
1. Be considered more as an execu- tive of the School Board than as one of the teachers	10 19.0	6 19.0	91 16.0	15 15.5
2. Cease to be a member of the teachers' association when appointed	4 20.0	2 20.0	90 17.0	16 13.5
3. Share with other principals in attending Board meetings	67 8.0	14 13.0	112 10.0	16 13.5
4. Be prepared to offer profes- sional advice at Board meetings	80 4.0	18 8.0	139 2.0	21 3.5
5. Refer all experimentation to his Superintendent	26 18.0	16 11.5	89 18.0	13 17.0
6. Maintain liaison with the Board on educational matters through his Superintendent	70 6.0	19 4.0	124 7.0	21 3.5
7. Deal with the Board on profes- sional matters through his profes- sional association	58 11.0	8 18.0	42 20.0	12 18.0
8. Be a member of at least one community organization	60 10.0	12 15.0	92 15.0	9 19.0
9. Initiate or maintain a local Parent-Teacher Association	37 17.0	10 16.5	84 19.0	8 20.0
10. Keep his community informed more than by bulletins via pupils	63 9.0	18 8.0	104 14.0	20 7.0
11. Be consulted before new staff appointments are made to his school	82 2.5	19 4.0	121 8.0	19 9.5



TABLE XX (Continued)

Item	Principals		Superintendents		School Trustees		Secretaries	
The Elementary Principal should:	f	rank	f	rank	f	rank	f	rank
12. Set out in writing the duties delegated to his vice-principal	54	14.0	16	11.5	125	6.0	18	11.5
13. Initiate or maintain a Policy Handbook for his school	55	13.0	17	10.0	107	13.0	15	15.5
14. Chair all staff meetings when he is present	53	15.0	10	16.5	110	11.0	18	11.5
15. At his Superintendent's discretion, make written reports on his teachers, whatever the size of his school	41	16.0	13	14.0	126	5.0	19	9.5
16. Maintain liaison with the Board on business matters through the Secretary-Treasurer	69	7.0	20	1.0	130	3.0	21	3.5
17. Have sufficient freedom from teaching and clerical duties	83	1.0	19	4.0	142	1.0	22	1.0
18. Have a large degree of freedom in ordering teaching supplies and library books	82	2.5	19	4.0	113	9.0	21	3.5
19. Be a member of the committee which makes recommendations for the budget of his school	73	5.0	19	4.0	128	4.0	20	7.0
20. Be expected to work beyond the normal school year	56	12.0	18	8.0	109	12.0	20	7.0





expectations was between school trustees and secretary-treasurers; rho was found to be 0.83, with a  $t$  value of 6.3. For rank correlation of twenty items, the number used in this study, the critical or minimum value of  $t$  is 2.1 for the 0.05 level of confidence;<sup>2</sup> thus, the correlation coefficient of 0.83 indicated significant correlation and Hypothesis III was rejected for trustees and secretary-treasurers.

Between elementary principals and district superintendents, the correlation coefficient was found to be 0.81, with a  $t$  value of 5.9; the correlation was significant and Hypothesis III was rejected for principals and superintendents.

Between district superintendents and secretary-treasurers, the correlation coefficient was found to be 0.80, with a  $t$  value of 5.7; the correlation was significant at the 0.05 level and Hypothesis III was rejected for superintendents and secretary-treasurers.

Between elementary principals and secretary-treasurers, and between district superintendents and school trustees, the correlation coefficients were 0.71 in each case, with a  $t$  value of 4.3; the correlations were significant at the 0.05 level, and Hypothesis III was rejected for both pairs of groups.

The lowest statistical correlation on overall expectations was between elementary principals and school trustees; the correlation coefficient of 0.66, with a  $t$  value of 3.7, was, however, significant at the 0.05 level.

Hypothesis III was, therefore, rejected for all possible pairs

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<sup>2</sup>Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 308.





of responding groups. The results indicate that, on the overall expectations for the tasks of the elementary principal investigated in this study, the four responding groups expressed sufficient consensus to suggest that overall conflict, within the limits of the study, is not serious.

Since this study was confined to a survey of a number of tasks which were believed to be controversial, the results reported in this section indicate that, if all his tasks were taken into consideration, it would be found that the elementary principal operates in a climate of general agreement among the administrators of his school district.

### III. TREATMENT OF THE DATA AND FINDINGS: HYPOTHESIS IV

Hypothesis IV stated that the amount of conflict between individual principals and each of the reference groups within their own school districts is not related to certain characteristics of the principals themselves, namely: age, experience, teacher certification, attendance at school board meetings, attendance at administrators' meetings.

#### Data for Hypothesis IV

Data for determining the amount of conflict between individual principals and their reference groups were obtained from the responses to the questionnaire (Appendix B) sent to all participants in this study. The characteristics of the principals were obtained from responses to a separate questionnaire (Appendix D) constructed by the writer and sent to all principals taking part in the study. The questionnaire was not always answered completely, hence the differences



of total number of principals, N, shown in the tables in this section.

### Description of the Principals

Age. The elementary principals responding to this study ranged from less than twenty-six years of age to more than sixty, but none was over sixty-five, the normal age for teachers' retirement in British Columbia. The median age was between forty-one and forty-five. The data are shown in Table XXI.

Number of years as principal. As teachers in British Columbia are subject to mobility, especially when seeking appointments to administrative positions, respondents were asked to state the number of years they had spent as principals in their present districts and elsewhere.

Twenty-six principals had been in their present district nine years or more, and fifty-five had not been principals elsewhere. This suggested the possibility that mobility decreased when a teacher was appointed to a principalship. The median length of stay in the present district was seven years; the median was nil for service elsewhere as principals. The data are shown in Table XXII.

Teaching certificate. The majority of elementary principals responding to the questionnaire had EA (elementary advanced), PC (professional conditional), or PB (professional basic) teaching certificates from the Department of Education in British Columbia, granted on completion of three, four, or five years of university education respectively. Since this study did not include schools with less than 150 pupils, these data do not cover the considerable number of principals of one- to four-





TABLE XXI  
RESPONDING PRINCIPALS CLASSIFIED BY AGE

Age Range in Years	Number of Principals (N=83)
Younger than 26	1
26 - 30	6
31 - 35	17
36 - 40	18
41 - 45	11
46 - 50	10
51 - 55	13
56 - 60	5
60 - 65	2
Older than 65	0

TABLE XXII  
RESPONDING PRINCIPALS CLASSIFIED BY LENGTH OF TIME AS PRINCIPALS

Number of Years As Principal	Number of Principals	
	As Principals in Present District (N=81)	As Principals Elsewhere (N=83)
0	*	55
1	4	6
2	6	5
3	8	4
4	8	1
5	10	2
6	2	2
7	8	1
8	9	3
9 or more	26	4

\*The uncompleted year at the time of the survey counted as one year in the principalship.





room schools in the districts surveyed. The data are shown in Table XXIII.

Number of meetings attended in the school year 1962-1963. Twenty-eight principals reported attending no board meetings, eight reported attending nine or more in the school year 1962-1963. The median was one board meeting in the year. Three principals reported attending no administrators' meetings with the district superintendent, thirty-two reported nine or more such meetings attended. The median was eight meetings in the year. The data are shown in Table XXIV.

#### Treatment of the Data

In the analysis for Hypothesis IV, the original responses to each questionnaire item were given numerical scores from five to one as follows:

Strongly Agree . . . . .	5
Agree . . . . .	4
Neutral . . . . .	3
Disagree . . . . .	2
Strongly Disagree . . . . .	1

The scores for the trustees of each school district were averaged for each item, and the averages were listed with the scores for the district superintendent and secretary-treasurer of that district. For each school district where there was only one principal responding, scores for the principal were listed and the difference found between these scores and the scores of the other respondents, one at a time and item by item, and the three sets of differences totalled. Where more than one



TABLE XXIII

RESPONDING PRINCIPALS CLASSIFIED BY TEACHING CERTIFICATE HELD

British Columbia Teaching Certificate	Number of Principals (N=81)
Elementary Basic	8
Elementary Advanced	18
Professional Conditional	15
Professional Basic	30
Professional Advanced	10

TABLE XXIV

RESPONDING PRINCIPALS CLASSIFIED BY NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATIVE  
MEETINGS ATTENDED IN SCHOOL YEAR

Number of Meetings	Number of Principals	
	Attending School Board Meetings (N=82)	Attending Administrators' Meetings with the District Superintendent (N=80)
0	28	3
1	21	3
2	10	8
3	7	1
4	4	6
5	2	8
6	0	8
7	2	2
8	0	9
9 or more	8	32



principal responded, the process was repeated for each principal. An illustration of the data obtained for a school district with two elementary principals responding is given in Appendix E (Table XXVII).

This treatment of the data supplied quantitative weightings for the differences between each principal's responses and the responses of his three alter groups. It was assumed that using the data from within each school district would give a truer description of the state of conflict for each principal than by comparing him with the average of all respondents in each group.

By coding the characteristic responses from the principals, principals were ranked by each characteristic and by the average scores obtained from the differences with each alter group. Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation, rho, was calculated for each characteristic with each alter group, and checked for significance at the 0.05 level of confidence, as described by Ferguson,<sup>3</sup> who states the following numerical values of rho are required for significance at the 0.05 level:

N = 5,	rho = 0.900
N = 8,	rho = 0.643
N = 9,	rho = 0.600
N = 10,	rho = 0.564

#### Findings for Hypothesis IV

Age. When principals were compared by age with their differences in expectations from trustees, the coefficient of correlation was very

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 179-183, and Table G, p. 316.





small,  $-0.05$ , and with their differences in expectations from superintendents it was zero. With secretary-treasurers' opinions the correlation was higher,  $\rho$  being  $0.52$ , but this was not statistically significant at the  $0.05$  level of confidence.

The tabulation of data to obtain the coefficient of correlation between principals and trustees for the characteristic of age is shown in Table XXV. Abbreviated tabulations used in the remainder of the findings for Hypothesis IV are collected in Appendix E (Tables XXVIII-XXXIV).

Number of years as principal. When principals were compared by their tenure of the principalship in their present districts with their differences in expectations from trustees, the coefficient of correlation was  $0.21$ , and as principals elsewhere it was  $-0.41$ . The corresponding values for superintendents were  $0.10$  and  $-0.16$ ; for secretary-treasurers,  $0.43$  and  $0.04$ . In none of these comparisons was the correlation significant at the  $0.05$  level of confidence.

Teaching certificate. When principals were compared by the British Columbia teaching certificates they held with their differences in expectations from trustees, the coefficient of correlation was zero; with their differences in expectations from superintendents,  $\rho$  was  $0.20$ . With secretary-treasurers the correlation was higher,  $\rho$  being  $0.5$ , but as only five categories were used for this characteristic, the correlation was well below the value of  $0.9$  required for significance.



TABLE XXV

DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSE SCORES BETWEEN PRINCIPALS AND TRUSTEES  
RANKED AGAINST AGE OF PRINCIPAL

Principals		Differences with Trustees				
Age of Principals (Years)	Number of Principals (N=74)	Total	Average	Rank	d	d <sup>2</sup>
1 61-65	2	28	14.0	2	1	1
2 56-60	6	111	18.5	5	3	9
3 51-55	12	235	19.6	8	5	25
4 46-50	9	170	18.9	7	3	9
5 41-45	10	184	18.4	4	-1	1
6 36-40	14	262	18.7	6	0	0
7 31-35	16	284	17.7	3	-4	16
8 26-30	4	81	20.3	9	1	1
9 Under 26	1	7	7.0	1	-8	64

$\rho = -0.05$



School board meetings. When principals were compared by the number of school board meetings they attended during the school year with their differences in expectations with their alter groups, the values of rho obtained were -0.02 with trustees, 0.05 with superintendents, and 0.07 with secretary-treasurers. None of these values indicated significant correlation.

Administrators' meetings with superintendent. When principals were compared by the number of administrators' meetings, with the superintendent, they had attended with their differences in expectations from trustees, the coefficient of correlation was -0.20. With their differences in expectations from superintendents it was -0.15, and from secretary-treasurers rho was 0.47. None of these values reached that required for significance.

By all characteristics, and by differences of expectations from the three alter groups, no significant correlation was found; thus, Hypothesis IV was accepted without reservation.

#### IV. SUMMARY

##### Hypothesis III

Data obtained from the questionnaires were ranked by frequency of "agree" responses. This enabled correlation coefficients between the expressed opinions of each group to be calculated. The results were that, between the expectations of:





Secretary-treasurers and trustees,	$\rho = 0.83;$
Principals and superintendents,	$\rho = 0.81;$
Superintendents and secretary-treasurers,	$\rho = 0.80;$
Secretary-treasurers and principals,	$\rho = 0.71;$
Superintendents and trustees,	$\rho = 0.71;$
Trustees and principals,	$\rho = 0.66.$

In each case, the correlation was significant at the 0.05 level of confidence.

Hypothesis III was rejected, and it was accepted that, on the overall expectations for the elementary principalship as investigated in this study, the four responding groups expressed sufficient consensus for it to be suggested that overall conflict is not severe enough to cause concern.

#### Hypothesis IV

Data were obtained from the general questionnaire and from a questionnaire submitted to principals only asking for information on certain personal characteristics. The data were analyzed to obtain correlation coefficients between the characteristics of the responding principals and the amounts of conflict calculated between the principals and their alter groups within their own school districts.

It was found that no significant correlation existed between (a) the characteristics of age, experience, attendance at school board meetings and at administrators' meetings with the district superintendent, and (b) the differences in expectations between the principals and the trustees, superintendents, and secretary-treasurers within their own



school districts.

Hypothesis IV was, therefore, accepted, that the amounts of conflict between individual principals and each of the alter groups within their own school districts is not related to the characteristics of the principals themselves that were included in this study.

Although a different study may reveal relationships in this area, the findings related to Hypothesis IV suggest the possibility that, if certain characteristics of the incumbent of the focal position, the elementary principalship, are not related to role conflicts present, then role conflict may be a function of the role rather than of the individual holding that role.



## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### I. SUMMARY OF THE PROBLEM AND RESEARCH DESIGN

##### The Problem

As an administrator, the elementary principal is required to translate organization, administration, and supervision into action. Some tasks will become routine and a set procedure will follow. A number of actions, however, will depend upon interpretation of policy, while others may not appear to be based on policy. In these cases, the principal's actions may differ from what other interested persons or groups may expect. It was the purpose of this study to explore disagreement in expectations for certain tasks of the elementary principal among principals themselves, among district superintendents, among secretary-treasurers of school districts, and among school trustees. It was also proposed to explore disagreements in expectations between the groups, and to investigate the possibility of a relationship between the disagreements found and certain characteristics of the elementary principals responding to the study.

##### Hypotheses

To facilitate the investigation of the problem by employing statistical procedures, four hypotheses were set up:

Hypothesis I. There are conflicting expectations on certain





aspects of the job of the elementary principal among elementary principals themselves, among district superintendents, among school trustees, and among secretary-treasurers.

Hypothesis II. On individual tasks of the elementary principalship there is disagreement between elementary principals and (a) district superintendents, (b) school trustees, (c) secretary-treasurers; between district superintendents and (a) school trustees, (b) secretary-treasurers; and (c) between school trustees and secretary-treasurers.

Hypothesis III. When the individual tasks of the elementary principalship are considered together, there is no significant correlation of expectations between each pair of responding groups.

Hypothesis IV. The amount of conflict between individual principals and each of the reference groups within their own districts is not related to certain characteristics of the principals themselves, namely: age, experience, teacher certification, attendance at school board meetings, and attendance at administrators' meetings.

### Sample

The sample consisted of 280 completed questionnaires from eighty-seven elementary principals, twenty superintendents, twenty-three secretary-treasurers, and one hundred fifty trustees from thirty school districts in the interior of British Columbia. The response was 79 per cent of the total number of questionnaires distributed. Schools with fewer than one hundred fifty pupils were arbitrarily omitted, so that



every elementary principal contacted had a school of at least four classrooms to administer.

### Instrumentation

A questionnaire, which elicited responses of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree concerning twenty selected tasks from the elementary principalship, was developed. A personal data sheet was added for principals.

### Method of Collecting and Analyzing the Data

Questionnaires were sent by mail, personally addressed to trustees, secretary-treasurers, and district superintendents, and to all elementary schools in the districts surveyed which showed an enrollment of one hundred fifty or more. Individuals were asked to return completed questionnaires in the stamped, addressed envelopes provided.

Data from the questionnaire responses were reduced to a simple nominal scale of "agree" and "disagree" responses, and also separated into rank order. Ratio comparisons were made using the chi-square test for two independent samples, and ranking comparisons were made using Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation, with tied ranks where appropriate. Statistical significance throughout the study was tested at the 0.05 level of confidence.

## II. RESULTS

Since the results were centered around the testing of hypotheses, they are summarized under each hypothesis.





### Hypothesis I

This hypothesis was accepted. Conflicting expectations on the tasks surveyed were found among elementary principals, district superintendents, school trustees, and secretary-treasurers.

The response patterns were further analyzed into "low," "medium," and "high" conflict responses. There were forty-four cases of low conflict, twenty-six cases of medium conflict, and ten cases of high conflict. Similar numbers of items for each degree of conflict throughout each responding group suggested that distribution of conflict diminished in extent as it increased in degree.

Study of the responses within four task areas showed that school-community relations produced the most conflict, possibly because of the dual role held by most respondents--member of the school system on the one hand, member of the community, and, in some cases, parent of a school child, on the other. The area of organization and structure followed, the area of staff personnel was third, while tasks in the area of business management produced very little evidence of role conflict.

Among individual tasks, the suggestion that individual principals should deal with their boards through their professional association gave rise to most conflict.

### Hypothesis II

This hypothesis was accepted in its entirety. Disagreements of opinion were found in some aspects of the elementary principalship between principals and superintendents, principals and trustees,





principals and secretary-treasurers, superintendents and trustees, superintendents and secretary-treasurers, and between trustees and secretary-treasurers.

Within the four task areas, most conflict between groups was found in the two areas of staff personnel and organization and structure. The area of school-community relations produced a similar pattern of responses giving the highest average of conflict within groups but the least conflict between groups. The small amount of conflict between groups found in the area of business management supported the findings for this area under Hypothesis I.

The individual tasks concerned with the executive position of the principal, dealing with professional matters, writing teacher reports in small schools, ceasing to be a member of the teachers' association, and referral of experimentation, were responsible for most of the conflicts between groups. The first three of these tasks also ranked high in their contribution to conflict within groups.

### Hypothesis III

This hypothesis was rejected for all pairs of responding groups. Significant correlation at the 0.05 level was found between each pair of responding groups when the twenty items on the questionnaire were ranked for each group by the frequency of their agree responses.

It was noted that the pair of groups, principals and trustees, registering the lowest correlation coefficient also registered the greatest amounts of conflict among themselves under Hypothesis I, and the greatest number of cases of between-group conflict under Hypothesis II.



#### Hypothesis IV

This hypothesis was accepted in its entirety. Using rank correlation, significant at the 0.05 level, no relationships were found between conflict and the personal characteristics of the principals, namely: age, experience, teacher certificate, attendance at school board meetings, and attendance at administrators' meetings.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

The major conclusions of this study were that:

1. Role conflict did exist within the elementary principalship.
2. Conflict of expectations regarding the tasks of the elementary principal existed within groups of administrators and trustees, and also between these groups.
3. Of the groups studied, most conflict arose from differences of expectations between elementary principals and school trustees.
4. The distribution of conflict diminished in extent as it increased in degree or intensity.
5. Conflict of expectations between elementary principals and other persons involved with the administration of elementary schools was not related to such factors as age, experience, certification, or attendance at administrative meetings, of the principals concerned.
6. Individual aspects of the elementary principalship giving rise to conflict of expectations included whether or not the principal should:
  - (a) Be considered more as an executive of the school board than as one of the teachers;





- (b) Cease to be a member of the teachers' professional association when he is appointed;
- (c) Deal with the board on professional matters through his professional association;
- (d) Be a member of at least one community organization other than a church or his professional association;
- (e) Do his best to initiate or maintain a local Parent-Teacher Association;
- (f) At his superintendent's discretion, be required to make written reports on his teachers, whatever the size of his school;
- (g) Refer all experimentation in his school to his superintendent before allowing it to be undertaken.

7. The task area of Business Management could be ignored as a source of conflict of expectations in the elementary principalship.

Although the presence of role conflict was demonstrated by the study, the writer concluded that it was not present to the extent that it caused a major problem in the elementary principalship in the interior of British Columbia.

This survey was restricted to a portion of British Columbia, the elementary principalship of schools with four or more classrooms, and to three reference groups--trustees, secretary-treasurers, and superintendents. Further surveys could be undertaken in different parts of British Columbia, particularly the lower mainland with its greater pupil enrolment. Also, the secondary school principalship could be studied, and other reference groups such as parents, teachers, and students could be surveyed.





#### IV. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The pattern of responses to the suggestion that the principal should be considered more as an executive of the board than as a teacher was from majority agreement by school trustees and secretary-treasurers, through small majority disagreement by district superintendents, to large majority disagreement by the principals. This suggested that the conflict between these opinions might be partially explained by the teacher background of principals, the teacher background modified by the executive position of district superintendents, and the business background of many secretary-treasurers and school trustees.

With the exception of the secretary-treasurers, the pattern of responses to the suggestion that the principal should deal with the board on professional matters was similar but in reverse, from majority disagreement by school trustees, through superintendents who were evenly divided in their opinions, to majority agreement by principals and secretary-treasurers. This suggested that the conflict between these opinions might be partially explained by the federation or "union" orientation of the principals and the management orientation of school boards, with superintendents maintaining a neutral position and secretary-treasurers tending to protect their boards from direct approach by individuals.

No indications were obtained from this study as to how principal behaviour might affect conflict in expectations for his position, nor was it established whether or not principals perceived any or all of the conflicting expectations indicated by the differences of expressed



opinions. It was, however, resolved that the conflicting expectations were not related to the principals' characteristics surveyed in this study.

Some specific problems that might be studied in further research, stated in the form of questions, are:

1. Does conflict in educational administration arise from the teacher background of principals, supervisors, and superintendents, and the business background of many secretary-treasurers and school trustees?
2. Does conflict in educational administration arise from "union" orientation of the teaching profession and management orientation of school boards?
3. Is there a relation between principal behaviour and conflict in the elementary principalship?
4. To what extent is role conflict in the elementary principalship a function of the role?
5. To what extent is role conflict perceived in the elementary principalship?

### Recommendations

Although no statistical correlation was established between principals' attendance at board meetings and the differences of expectations between principals and their alter groups, there was evidence to suggest that contact between alter groups does diminish conflict of expectations between them. The results of the survey showed that the minimum between-group conflict occurred between the expectations of





secretary-treasurers and (a) school trustees, and (b) district superintendents. These same pairs of groups also registered high correlation between their overall expectations. In many school districts of British Columbia, the secretary-treasurer and district superintendent have offices in the same building, allowing for ease of intercommunication. Secretary-treasurers often meet with school trustees in committee or for informal discussions as well as during school board meetings. The results also showed that the most between-group conflict and the lowest correlation of expectations was between elementary principals and school trustees. Analysis of the data received showed that twenty-eight of the eighty-two principals who replied had not attended a board meeting during the previous school year. For the total sample of principals, the median attendance was one school board meeting in the school year. It is, therefore, recommended:

That from time to time school boards invite their elementary principals to meet with them to:

1. Discuss common problems;
2. Discuss overall philosophies for elementary education in their districts; and
3. Draw up and maintain a mutually acceptable job description for the elementary principalship.

On the two suggestions that the principal should be more executive than teacher, and should cease to be a member of the teachers' professional association, the analysis of data showed that the majorities of trustees and secretary-treasurers registered agreement, and the





majorities of superintendents registered disagreement. This pattern of responses suggests that the differences of opinion may arise from the teacher-professional orientation of educational administrators and the business-management orientation of school boards. To investigate the possibilities of modifying these differing expectations and of obtaining a greater measure of consensus, it is recommended:

That means be taken, among and between educational administrators and school boards, at local and provincial levels, to:

1. Study differences of opinion which seem to exist on the professional position of the elementary principal within the school district organization and within the provincial system; and

2. If differences of opinion are confirmed, attempt to resolve the differences or seek a mutually acceptable compromise.

It is suggested that, if the two recommendations made in this study could be put into practice, role conflict in the elementary principalship might be reduced, and the elementary principal might find it less difficult to define his own role.



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## APPENDIX A

### THE PILOT INSTRUMENT





Box 641,  
Kitimat, B. C.

	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
The Elementary School Principal in B.C. Should. . .			
1. Be considered as an executive of the School Board more than as one of the teachers			
2. Attend Summer School, Conferences, or the equivalent, sufficiently often to keep abreast of developments in the educational field			
3. Maintain liaison on <u>educational</u> matters with the board through the office of the District Superintendent			
4. Maintain liaison on <u>business</u> matters through the office of the Secretary-Treasurer			
5. Deal with the Board on <u>professional</u> matters through his local Teachers' or Principals' Association			
6. Attend Board meetings as often as possible			
7. Be prepared to offer professional advice if attending Board meetings..			
8. Be prepared to answer questions concerning his own school if attending Board meetings.			
9. Be a member of at least one community organization other than a church or Teachers' Association			
10. Do his best to initiate or maintain a local PTA			
11. Keep his community informed on school activities through whatever media are locally available.			
12. Organize his school in the way he thinks will serve the pupils best, subject to the approval of the District Superintendent			
13. Refer all experimentation in his school to the District Superintendent for approval before allowing it to be undertaken			
14. Receive sufficient clerical assistance and freedom from teaching to enable him to be conversant with the learning situations in the classrooms with a view to maintaining or attaining the highest possible standards of instruction			
15. Be consulted by School Board and/or District Superintendent before new staff appointments are made to his school			



	Agree	Dis- agree	Neutral
16. Set out in writing the duties delegated to his staff, including the vice-principal where appointed			
17. Chair all staff meetings when he is present			
18. Preside over all Assemblies when he is available			
19. Consult with his staff to obtain their agreement and understanding on a school policy for pupil promotion			
20. Arrange for substitute teachers as required, using a list of names approved by the District Superintendent			
21. Be required to make written reports on his teachers whatever the size of his school, and the Public Schools Act amended accordingly			
22. Have a large degree of freedom in ordering normal teaching supplies, library books, gym equipment, and so forth, within his budget allowance, and with due regard to any local or Department rules			
23. Make recommendations for capital expenditure to maintain or improve the efficiency of his school both educationally and physically			
24. Maintain an adequate accounting system for such money as may be handled in his school			

-----

Please add any "statements" you think should be included in this study:

25.

26.

27.



## APPENDIX B

### THE REVISED QUESTIONNAIRE





## DIVISION OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

## UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Expectations on Certain Tasks in the Elementary Principalship  
In British Columbia

All replies to this questionnaire will be confidential. Neither names of respondents nor identities of school districts will be divulged.

. . . . .

Please consider each of the following statements in the light of what you believe should be done as far as the elementary principals in your school district are concerned, and check under the column which best represents your reaction.

. . . . .

The principal of a Public Elementary School in British Columbia Should:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Be considered more as an executive of the School Board than as one of the teachers . . . . .						1
Cease to be a member of the teachers' professional association when he is appointed Principal . . . . .						2
Share with the other Principals in his district in attending Board meetings . . . . .						3
Be prepared to offer professional advice if attending Board meetings . . . . .						4
Refer all experimentation in his school to his Superintendent before allowing it to be undertaken . . . . .						5
Maintain liaison on educational matters with the Board through his Superintendent . . . . .						6
Deal with the Board on professional matters through his professional association . . . . .						7
Be a member of at least one community organization other than a church or his professional association . . . . .						8
Do his best to initiate or maintain a local Parent-Teacher Association . . . . .						9

(Your comments on any of these statements are invited.)



	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Keep his community informed on school activities in more ways than sending home bulletins with the pupils . . . . .						10
Be consulted before new staff appointments are made to his school . . . . .						11
Set out in writing the duties delegated to his vice-principal where one is appointed . . . . .						12
Initiate or maintain a Policy Handbook for his school . .						13
Chair all staff meetings when he is present . . . . .						14
At his Superintendent's discretion, be required to make written reports on his teachers, whatever the size of his school . . . . .						15
Maintain liaison on business matters with the Board through the Secretary-Treasurer . . . . .						16
Have sufficient freedom from teaching and clerical duties to enable him to be conversant with the learning situations in the classrooms . . . . .						17
Have a large degree of freedom in ordering such things as teaching supplies and library books within his overall budget . . . . .						18
Be a member of the committee which makes recommendations for the budget of his school . . . . .						19
Be expected to work beyond the normal school year . . . .						20

(Your comments on any of these statements are invited.)



## APPENDIX C

### LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION

#### FOLLOW-UP LETTERS





Box 641,  
Kitimat, B.C.

November, 1962

Dear

As part of my work towards the degree of M.Ed. at the University of Alberta, in the Division of Educational Administration, I am studying the Theory of Social Role with particular respect to the different concepts of the Elementary Principalship as might be held by the Principals themselves, District Superintendents, and School Boards.

To assist me in this, would you please indicate your opinions on the matters listed on the accompanying form, and return it to me in the envelope provided.

Answers will be received in confidence, but a statistical analysis will be included in my thesis.

Yours sincerely,

#### SPECIAL NOTE

This is the first draft, and is only being sent to School Boards, Superintendents, and Elementary Principals, in the Northern District.

It would be appreciated if you would check "Agree" or "Disagree" wherever possible, then give a short explanation of why you are "Neutral" on the remaining statements.

Any comments you care to make will be used in redrafting the form before sending it out across the province.

It is hoped that an abstract of my findings will be published in the Principals' Journal.

Thanks,



Box 641,  
Kitimat, B.C.

November, 1963.

Dear

As part of my work towards a master's degree in educational administration I am writing a thesis on the elementary principalship in British Columbia.

Would you be good enough to help me find out how much agreement there is on some of the tasks of the elementary principal by completing the enclosed inquiry form and returning it to me?

It is hoped that an abstract of my findings will be published in the professional literature next summer.

Yours sincerely,



Box 641,  
Kitimat, B.C.

December, 1963.

Dear Trustee:

According to my records, my questionnaire to you has not yet been answered.

It would greatly enhance the value of my study if you would indicate your opinions on the statements regarding the elementary principalship and return the form within the next few days. Another copy is enclosed in case you have mislaid the first.

Your co-operation in this matter would be personally appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Box 641,  
Kitimat, B.C.

December, 1963.

Dear Secretary-Treasurer:

According to my records, my questionnaire to you has not yet been returned.

Because of the small number of Secretary-Treasurers concerned, a high proportion of returns would greatly enhance the value of my study. If you consider that some of the questions do not concern you, please so indicate and complete the remainder. Another copy is enclosed in case you have mislaid the first.

Your co-operation in this matter would be personally appreciated.

Yours sincerely,





## APPENDIX D

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO PRINCIPALS ONLY







## APPENDIX E

### SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES





TABLE XXVI

COMPARISON OF RESPONSES ON INDIVIDUAL ITEMS USING CHI-SQUARE  
TEST FOR INDEPENDENCE BETWEEN RESPONDING GROUPS

Questionnaire Item Number	Between					
	Princ. & Supt.	Princ. & Sec.	Princ. & Trustees	Supt. & Sec.	Supt. & Trustees	Sec. & Trustees
1	5.8 <sup>a</sup>	29.6 <sup>a</sup>	57.0 <sup>a</sup>	3.7	5.2 <sup>a</sup>	0.3
2	0.2	56.0 <sup>a</sup>	88.0 <sup>a</sup>	17.0 <sup>a</sup>	23.0 <sup>a</sup>	0.7
3	1.5	0.6	1.5	-	-	-
4	-	-	0.3	-	-	-
5	12.0 <sup>a</sup>	8.8 <sup>a</sup>	25.0 <sup>a</sup>	-	0.4	-
6	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	6.9 <sup>a</sup>	0.9	36.0 <sup>a</sup>	0.4	1.3	4.9 <sup>a</sup>
8	0.9	-	1.7	0.7	0.2	1.2
9	0.3	0.4	12.0 <sup>a</sup>	0.1	0.3	-
10	0.1	0.4	-	-	0.4	0.6
11	-	-	8.1 <sup>a</sup>	-	1.2	0.2
12	-	-	8.2 <sup>a</sup>	-	1.0	0.7
13	1.0	-	0.5	-	0.5	-
14	1.6	0.2	2.0	2.5	5.6 <sup>a</sup>	-
15	1.3	7.8 <sup>a</sup>	47.0 <sup>a</sup>	1.8	17.0 <sup>a</sup>	0.2
16	0.6	-	-	-	0.7	-
17	-	-	-	-	0.3	-
18	-	-	9.3 <sup>a</sup>	-	0.3	1.7
19	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	1.3	4.9 <sup>a</sup>	3.4	0.5	-	2.2

NOTE: The numerical value of chi-square was not recorded when it was less than 0.1.

<sup>a</sup>Significantly independent at the 0.05 level; chi-square greater than 3.84.



TABLE XXVII

DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSE SCORES BETWEEN TWO ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS  
AND THE TRUSTEE AVERAGE, DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT, AND  
SECRETARY-TREASURER OF ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Questionnaire Item Number	Response Scores <sup>a</sup>					Differences Between					
	Trustee Average	District Supt.	Secre- tary	Princi- pal A	Princi- pal B	Princi- pal A &			Princi- pal B &		
						T	D	S	T	D	S
1	2	2	2	2	1	-	-	-	1	1	1
2	3	2	5	1	1	2	1	4	2	1	4
3	3	4	5	4	4	1	-	1	1	-	1
4	4	4	5	4	4	-	-	1	-	-	1
5	4	4	5	4	2	-	-	1	2	2	3
6	5	4	5	3	2	2	1	2	3	2	3
7	3	4	4	4	1	1	-	-	2	3	3
8	4	3	3	4	4	-	1	1	-	1	1
9	4	2	4	4	4	-	2	-	-	2	-
10	4	2	5	4	4	-	2	1	-	2	1
11	3	4	4	5	5	2	1	1	2	1	1
12	4	3	4	4	4	-	1	-	-	1	-
13	4	4	3	5	4	1	1	2	-	-	1
14	4	2	5	2	5	2	-	3	1	3	-
15	4	2	5	4	4	-	2	1	-	2	1
16	4	4	4	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	4	4	5	5	5	1	1	-	1	1	-
18	3	4	5	5	5	2	1	-	2	1	-
19	3	4	4	5	4	2	1	1	1	-	-
20	4	2	5	4	4	-	2	1	-	2	1
TOTALS						16	17	20	18	25	22

<sup>a</sup>5 for Strongly Agree; 4 for Agree; 3 for Neutral; 2 for Disagree; 1 for Strongly Disagree.













TABLE XXX  
DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSE SCORES RANKED AGAINST  
TEACHING CERTIFICATE

British Columbia Teaching Certificate		Principals' Differences With					
		Trustees		Superintendents		Secretaries	
		Avge. Rank		Avge. Rank		Avge. Rank	
1	Professional Advanced	16.7	1	15.5	1	20.3	1
2	Professional Basic	19.0	5	18.3	4	21.7	3
3	Professional Conditional	18.8	4	19.1	5	23.7	5
4	Elementary Advanced	18.5	3	17.8	2	21.4	2
5	Elementary Basic	18.0	2	18.2	3	22.4	4
rho =		0		0.20		0.50	



TABLE XXXI

DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSE SCORES RANKED AGAINST EXPERIENCE AS PRINCIPAL  
IN PRESENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Principals' Differences With							
Years as Principal In Present District		Trustees		Superintendents		Secretaries	
		Avg.	Rank	Avg.	Rank	Avg.	Rank
1	9 or more	18.1	2	17.5	3	22.2	5
2	8	20.3	9	19.8	7.5	22.4	6
3	7	18.9	4.5	18.3	4	22.5	7
4	6	19.0	6.5	22.0	9	25.0	9
5	5	15.9	1	15.5	1	20.8	2
6	4	18.7	3	18.6	5	22.8	8
7	3	18.9	4.5	17.4	2	16.3	1
8	2	20.2	8	19.4	6	21.5	3.5
9	1	19.0	6.5	19.8	7.5	21.5	3.5
rho =		0.21		0.10		0.43	





TABLE XXXII

DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSE SCORES RANKED AGAINST EXPERIENCE AS PRINCIPAL  
OTHER THAN IN PRESENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Years as Principal Elsewhere		Principals' Differences With					
		Trustees		Superintendents		Secretaries	
		Avg.	Rank	Avg.	Rank	Avg.	Rank
1	9 or more	17.7	5	18.3	6	25.7	8
2	8	21.0	7.5	20.3	8	16.5	1
3	7	26.0	10	-		29.0	9
4	6	19.5	6	20.5	9	24.0	6
5	5	24.0	9	20.0	7	25.0	7
6	4	14.0	1	16.0	1	-	
7	3	16.3	3	17.8	4	17.0	2
8	2	16.2	2	16.6	2	19.3	3
9	1	21.0	7.5	17.6	3	19.7	4
10	0	17.4	4	18.0	5	22.0	5
rho =		-0.41		-0.16		0.04	



TABLE XXXIII

DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSE SCORES RANKED AGAINST NUMBER OF SCHOOL BOARD  
MEETINGS ATTENDED BY PRINCIPALS IN ONE SCHOOL YEAR

Number of Board Meetings Attended		Principals' Differences With					
		Trustees		Superintendents		Secretaries	
		Avg.	Rank	Avg.	Rank	Avg.	Rank
1	9 or more	21.9	8	20.1	7	23.0	5.5
2	7	16.5	1	14.0	2	-	
3	5	17.7	3	13.5	1	22.0	4
4	4	20.7	7	20.3	8	29.0	7
5	3	17.4	2	16.8	3	19.8	1
6	2	20.3	6	19.2	6	21.8	3
7	1	17.8	4.5	18.1	5	23.0	5.5
8	0	17.8	4.5	17.7	4	20.7	2
rho =		-0.02		0.05		0.07	



TABLE XXXIV

DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSE SCORES RANKED AGAINST NUMBER OF ADMINISTRATORS'  
MEETINGS ATTENDED BY PRINCIPALS IN ONE SCHOOL YEAR

Number of Administrators' Meetings Attended		Principals' Differences With					
		Trustees		Superintendents		Secretaries	
		Avg.	Rank	Avg.	Rank	Avg.	Rank
1	9 or more	19.4	6	18.7	7	21.3	4.5
2	8	18.7	5	17.8	5	20.8	2
3	7	19.5	7	21.0	8	20.5	1
4	6	20.1	8	17.6	4	24.5	8
5	5	14.6	2	15.9	2	22.3	7
6	4	16.8	4	16.3	3	22.2	6
7	2	16.7	3	18.3	6	21.0	3
8	1	13.3	1	14.0	1	21.3	4.5
9	0	20.7	9	23.0	9	26.7	9
rho =		-0.20		-0.15		0.47	







**B29851**